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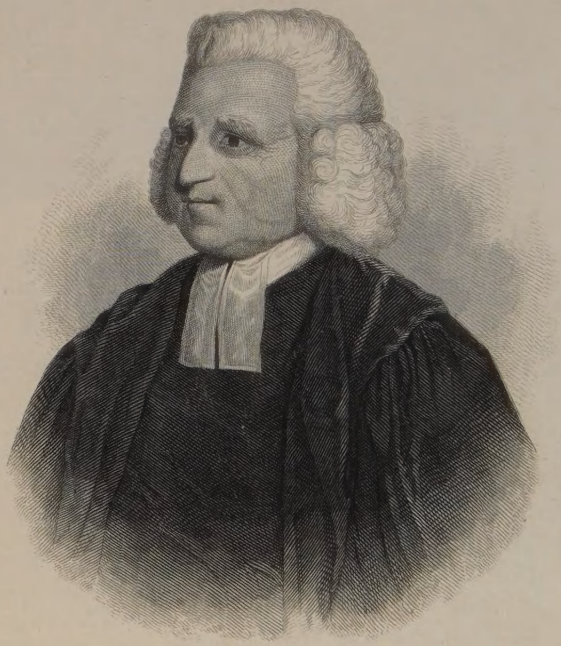

Rev. Charles Wesley, M. A.

SOMETIME STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

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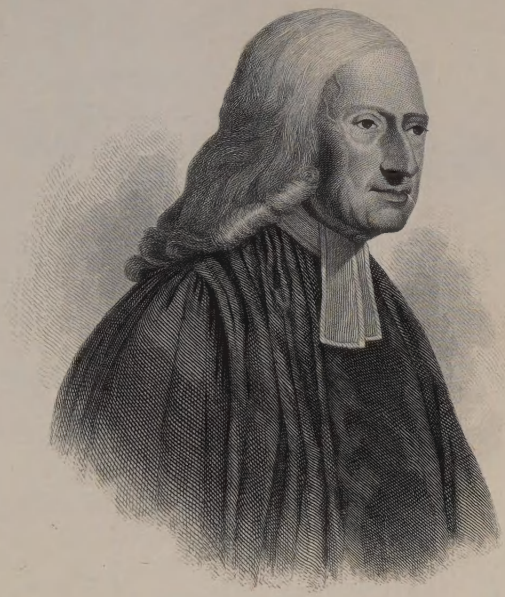

Rev. John Wesley, M. A.

LATE FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

ÆTATIS 87.

Engraved by J. Andrews, from an original Picture of the same Size engraved by J. Pittler, A. R. A. London. 1792.

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THE

LIFE

OF THE

REV. JOHN WESLEY, M.A.

SOME TIME FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

COLLECTED FROM HIS PRIVATE PAPERS AND PRINTED WORKS; AND WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF HIS EXECUTORS.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS ANCESTORS AND RELATIONS;

WITH

THE LIFE OF THE

REV. CHARLES WESLEY, M.A.

COLLECTED FROM HIS PRIVATE JOURNAL, AND NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

THE WHOLE FORMING A HISTORY OF METHODISM, IN WHICH THE PRINCIPLES AND ECONOMY OF THE METHODISTS ARE UNFOLDED.

BY JOHN WHITEHEAD, M.D.,

AUTHOR OF THE DISCOURSE DELIVERED AT MR. WESLEY'S FUNERAL,

(WHICH DISCOURSE IS INCLUDED IN THIS EDITION.)

——————In labours more abundant——
A workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of Truth.—PAUL.

WITH

AN INTRODUCTION,

BY THE REV. THOMAS H. STOCKTON.

VOL. I.

SECOND AMERICAN EDITION:

WITH PORTRAITS OF REV. JOHN, AND CHARLES, WESLEY.

PHILADELPHIA:
PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM S. STOCKTON.
1845.

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California

I hereby certify that this edition of WHITEHEAD'S LIFE OF WESLEY, stereotyped by me, is as accurate a copy of the original, as it was possible to execute.

GEO. A. CURTIS.

Boston, June 20, 1844.

Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1845, by
WILLIAM S. STOCKTON,
in the clerk's office of the District Court of the United States in and for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

PRINTED BY J. KAY, JUN. AND BROTHER.

INTRODUCTION.

THE value of literature is determined by the truth it embodies. Erroneous records are lamentable. But false records are abominable—always were, will be, and ought to be. Their authors are traitors to the cause of knowledge and virtue; and deserve to be sentenced, by a just criticism, to capital execution and perpetual infamy. Every apologist for them should be abandoned to immitigable dishonour.

In particular, what merit has Biography — if there be reason to doubt or deny its truth? Surely, none—it can have none. It is a wrong, both to the dead and living. It matters not who is its subject, or author; nor what extended and controlling connections they hold with social institutions and interests; nor what varied attractions of character, incident, and scenery, are involved in the narrative; nor what artistic genius and skill are shown in its plan and style; nor what personal, partisan, or general purposes are subserved by its publication—if it be not essentially true—honestly, of set intent, and in despite of all perverting influences, made so—it is execrable.

The work we now introduce to the reader has occasioned no little controversy. Perhaps this fact is to be regretted. The dispute is not yet decided. It ought to be. It may be. Nothing is necessary to this but an understanding of the case, and the faithful application to it of the principles of righteousness. The present seems to be a favourable opportunity for doing something toward this desirable consummation. It appears, that sufficient evidence has accumulated to make the case plain; and we cannot believe that a righteous judgment will much longer be withheld.

To arbitrate the differences of the dead—of men with whom we had no personal acquaintance, and of whom, without the possibility of explanation from them, we must judge entirely by documentary testimony—to disclose, though it be only for the vindication of condemned innocence and the honour of obscured merit, the frailties of opponents, who are, and in many respects deserve to be, illustrious and revered—and so to reverse the popular sentiment, resulting from individual and party misrepresentation, which has long prevailed—is a matter so delicate, that, without claiming more than an ordinary share of sensibility, we frankly acknowledge a tendency to shrink from it. And yet, it often becomes our duty to sacrifice our sensibilities at the shrine of truth and justice; and seek, in elaborate and impartial review of the past, such lessons of wisdom, both spiritual and practical, as may enable us the better to improve the present, and prepare for a brighter and happier future.

The parties, in the controversy now to be examined — and which we hope will be fairly and finally adjusted—are: DR. WHITEHEAD, on the one side; and DR. COKE, MR. MOORE, and the CONFERENCE, on the other. We love to cherish respect for them all; and not for them alone, but also for the myriads on myriads of our pious, intelligent and useful cotemporaries, who, as regards the members of the latter party especially, manifest, in all the world, a filial concern for their reputation and influence.

Entering upon our task, in this spirit, let us first inquire into the HISTORY—CHARACTER—POSITION—TRUSTS—and CONDUCT of DR. WHITEHEAD.

I.—HIS HISTORY.

Mr. Myles, in his "Chronological History" of the Methodists, has given: "A List of All the Itinerant Methodist Preachers" who laboured in connection with Mr. Wes-

ley and the Conference, from 1739 to 1802—dividing them into three classes. In the "First Race," we find the name of "Jn. Whitehead," who entered the Itinerancy in 1764, and retired from it in 1769." Of this race, Myles remarks: "They were greatly beloved by the people, who were witnesses of their piety, both in public and private." From the Preface to the "Life of Wesley," by Mr. Moore—who, it will be remembered, is one of the parties in this controversy—we derive the following paragraph, in continuance:

"He then married and settled in business at Bristol. From thence he removed to Wandsworth, in the vicinity of London, and opened a school. He there became acquainted with the late Dr. Lettsom, two of whose sons were his pupils. Under the Doctor's direction he studied physic, and by his recommendation he obtained from the late Mr. Barclay, an eminent Quaker, the appointment of guardian to his son, who was pursuing his studies at Leyden, in Holland. Mr. Whitehead himself at the same time completed his own studies in that University, and returned to England with the diploma of DOCTOR OF MEDICINE. He had, some time before, joined the society of Quakers; and, by their influence chiefly, he obtained the situation of Physician to the London Dispensary. After a few years, he again joined the Methodist Society, and was received by Mr. Wesley with his usual kindness."

In another passage, Mr. Moore states, that Dr. Whitehead applied, through him, to Mr. Wesley, "requesting to receive ordination from his hands, and to be appointed a superintendant;" but, that Mr. Wesley, though he "loved the man,—knew his versatility, and would not trust him again with so important an office." Recently, it has been asserted, by a Methodist Episcopal Journal in this country, on the authority of the English "Wesleyan Methodist Magazine," that he was afterward expelled from the Society, for alleged unfaithfulness, as a Trustee of Mr. Wesley's MSS. We doubt this. In whatever way he left the Society, however, it is certain, as will be seen, that he was very soon afterward reunited to it; and, it is supposed, remained in its fellowship while he lived. He died in 1804.

These are the chief facts we have collected, in respect of his general history. We are indebted for them to his opponents. We have no doubt that such of them as were published to injure him—his temporary union with the Friends, his request for Ordination, and his asserted expulsion—ought to receive qualifications which would invest him with honor rather than reproach. And when the intelligent and candid reader shall be informed of the circumstances which are yet to come into consideration, he will be prepared, we think, to avow the same conviction.

II. HIS CHARACTER.

The "British Critic" for 1793, in a notice of the first volume of this work, describes the Doctor as "the sensible Editor," and professes "great respect for his talents." That he *was* "sensible"—that his talents *deserved* "great respect," will be quickly perceived by the reader of his narrative. If any thing further be desirable, let him be compared with HAMPSON—COKE and MOORE—SOUTHEY—MOORE, alone—and WATSON—the other biographers. It will appear, we think, on examination, that he had a clear and strong mind; improved by the accomplishments of a respectable scholarship. His moral character—apart from the charges involved in this controversy, and which must be separately considered—seems to have been distinguished, in the estimation of the best qualified judges, for its honesty and simplicity. Mr. Moore acknowledges that Mr. Wesley "*loved* the man." Mr. Myles, speaking of the Committee by which the Doctor was appointed to compile the "Life," remarks, that they had "a *high opinion* of his *integrity*." Indeed, in the language of the same writer, in another passage, "he was *much esteemed* by *all* the parties." In a few words, the evidence represents a man of considerable natural and social advantages, hallowed by the acquisitions of Divine grace—a Christian, exemplifying and commending the religion he professed. If the investigations of the charges alluded to above shall result in his favor, it will be seen, in particular, that he was most

honorably devoted, in long-suffering and triumphant fidelity, to the just and true—that he regarded these as of infinitely greater moment than his affection for men or parties—and that it becomes us, now, to number him with "the RIGHTEOUS," who, notwithstanding all efforts to prevent the fulfilment of the Supreme decree, "shall be in everlasting remembrance."

III. HIS POSITION.

As a PHYSICIAN, his connexion with the London Dispensary is no slight proof of his qualifications and usefulness. Perhaps his influential acquaintance among the Friends, who, according to Mr. Moore, obtained the situation for him, had a similar appreciation of his personal character to that which Mr. Wesley manifested, when he declared:—"I am persuaded there is not such another physician in England."

As a PREACHER, he appears to have been attractive and profitable. Scarcely any stronger illustration could be given of his high standing in this respect, than the fact, that he, a Local Preacher, was selected, in preference to any of the Itinerants, to deliver Mr. Wesley's Funeral Sermon. There must have been something impressively appropriate in the general character of his pulpit ministrations, or this duty would not have been imposed, nor this distinction conferred upon him. The "Sermon," itself, accompanies this edition of the "Life."

As a WRITER, his Work is the best witness of his ability. The reader will form his own opinion of its arrangement, spirit and style. Its accuracy, it is presumed, will not be denied. It is believed to be as accurate as the Manuscripts and Correspondence of the Wesleys, and the Author's personal knowledge, could make it. Indeed, as far as we have seen, his opponents never denied the authenticity of his materials, or the fairness with which he exhibited them; but censured him merely for keeping and using them against their will, and in violation, as they assert, of his obligations. At the time of his appointment, he must have had some reputation as a writer, or such a task would hardly have been committed to his hands. When his production was published, the "British Critic" not only expressed, in general terms, "great respect for his talents," but especially commended his "zeal," "sensibility," and "indefatigable diligence"—the "circumstantial minuteness" of his "details"—his "honesty and truth."

IV. HIS TRUSTS.

Having been trusted, under Providence, in preference to all other physicians in England, with the natural life of the two illustrious brothers—and trusted too at times of greatest solicitude to their relatives and friends; it might be expected, in recollection of these and other relations, that some further proofs would be witnessed of the confidence of the Rev. J. Wesley, and that of the family and friends of Charles. Such proofs are at hand.

By referring to the copy of Mr. John Wesley's Will, the following items may be seen:—

"I give to Thomas Coke, Doctor John Whitehead, and Henry Moore, all the BOOKS which are in my study and bed-chamber at London, and in my studies elsewhere, in trust for the use of the preachers who shall labor here from time to time."

And, again, this:

"I give all my MANUSCRIPTS to Thomas Coke, Doctor Whitehead, and Henry Moore, to be burnt or published as they see good."

So much for the confidence of John Wesley. The confidence of the immediate friends of his brother, Charles, and, indeed, of the whole surviving Wesley family, was shown by the following additional trusts:—

The use of the PRIVATE DIARY of Charles Wesley; and

The use of the MANUSCRIPTS of the Wesley Family.

The confidence of the Preachers, Executors, and other friends of Mr. Wesley, at

the time of his decease, and, afterwards, of the Conference, is evident enough from their action:

In appointing the Doctor to preach the FUNERAL SERMON; and

In electing him to prepare the BIOGRAPHY.

It is proper to state, in relation to this last particular, that a formal meeting was held, in London — composed of the EXECUTORS, representing Mr. Wesley; the PREACHERS, representing the Conference; and OTHER FRIENDS, as if in representation of the Societies, at large—for the special purpose of selecting a Biographer. At this meeting, Mr. Rogers, the Superintendent of the London Circuit, within which our author resided and labored, proposed Dr. Whitehead for this office. He cheerfully agreed to serve; the meeting *unanimously* adopted the proposal; the next Conference *approved* the appointment, and added another distinction, by making him—though still a Local Preacher—a Member of the Book Committee. All this is stated on the authority of Mr. Moore, himself; and, in great part, in his own language.

V.—HIS CONDUCT.

In respect of the manner in which he discharged his obligations as Biographer, it may be well to regard, in the first place, his own testimony; and then adduce the judgment of a few other authorities.

The Author's own Testimony.

In his preface, Dr. Whitehead informs us, that he "determined to write, not only the Life of Mr. Wesley, but a History of Methodism, with the utmost impartiality to describe things as they have been, and as they are, without the false colouring that the spirit of a party will always give to history." Again, he declares: "My business has been, to guard my mind against any improper influence it [the controversy] might have on my judgment, in describing facts that have taken place in the establishment of Methodism, and to distinguish between the rational and liberal principles of Mr. Wesley, on which the Methodist Societies were founded, and the narrow and arbitrary conduct of a few individuals: *and this, by the grace of God, I hope has been carefully done.*"

With this explicit and solemn avowal on the part of the Biographer, we proceed to cite the judgment of the other authorities alluded to.

The London "Analytical Review."

In vol. xvii. for 1794, page 382, of this established and influential work, the following paragraph occurs, in a Review of Dr. Whitehead's *first* volume:

"The Life of Mr. Charles Wesley, which forms the principal part of this volume, consists chiefly of extracts from his PRIVATE JOURNAL. It lays open the religious state of his mind, and relates the particulars of his public labours, through the course of a long life, with all those peculiarities of sentiment and language, by which Methodism is so strongly marked. These memoirs are entitled to particular attention from the sect of which he and his brother were the founders, to whose diligent exertions, continued with unwearied zeal and perseverance, through a long course of years, it in a great measure owed its extensive and rapid progress. They may also be perused with advantage by other classes of readers, as affording them many AUTHENTIC MATERIALS, from which a judgment may be formed concerning the spirit, character, and tendency of a religious body, which, from the smallest beginnings, about the year 1730, has risen to a degree of magnitude and consequence sufficient to demand the attention of the statesman and philosopher, as well as the divine."

In vol. xxiv. for 1796, page 280, the Doctor's *second* volume is thus announced:—

"After an interval of about three years, appears Dr. Whitehead's second volume of the lives of J. and C. Wesley. The present volume resumes the Life of John Wesley, from the year 1735, when he went over to America. The narrative con

tains an account in regular series of Mr. Wesley's indefatigable labours, and of the progress of Methodism, authenticated and illustrated by a great number of extracts from Mr. Wesley's public writings and private papers, from the minutes of the Conference and other sources. The work is a full memoir of the life of a man, who, during the greater part of the present century, enjoyed a more extensive popularity than any other man living; and who, amidst all the peculiarities of the sect of which he was the father, is certainly entitled to an honourable place in the tablet of merit, as a great Reformer. At the same time the work conveys a more distinct and complete view of the principles of Methodists, and of their internal discipline and economy, than had before appeared; and is well adapted to furnish the future historian with large materials for a very important chapter in the ecclesiastical history of the eighteenth century. The writer being an admirer and a follower of Mr. Wesley, it will, of course, be expected that the affairs of the Methodists and the conduct of their founder, should be placed in the most favourable light, and that the work should be considerably tinctured with the spirit and language of the sect. The narrative, however, bears the marks of ACCURACY and FIDELITY; and as a RECORD OF FACTS respecting a religious body, which has for many years past materially affected the state of opinions and morals in this kingdom, it is of great value."

The London "Critical Review."

In vol. xii. for 1794, p. 207, of this work, a notice of Dr. Whitehead's *first* volume is concluded by this remark:—"On the whole, this work is ACCURATELY and WELL WRITTEN, but with a pen evidently favourable to Methodism."

The "British Critic."

In vol. viii. for 1796, page 636, a Review of our author's work closes thus:—"Dr. Whitehead is certainly entitled to the grateful acknowledgment of all those to whom Mr. WESLEY'S MEMORY IS DEAR; and his work is of GENERAL IMPORTANCE TO LITERATURE, as containing the BEST and MOST REGULAR history of a sect, which, however erroneous in a few points, has produced a beneficial operation upon the minds of many individuals; and may safely boast of several within its pale, distinguished by their blameless manners and useful accomplishments."

Let it not be supposed that the respectable Reviewers, from whose pages the above paragraphs are cited, were unaware of the controversy. They knew this fact, and wrote the more distinctly and emphatically because of it.

Life of Kilham.

In the "Life of the Rev. Alexander Kilham, Formerly a Preacher under the Rev. J. Wesley, and One of the Founders of the Methodist New Connection in 1797," &c., it is said, in a note on page 97, in addition to certain other remarks, showing the injustice which has been done to our author:

"Dr. Whitehead's is the BEST and MOST IMPARTIAL account of Mr. Wesley which has hitherto been written."

Adam Clarke.

Dr. Clarke, whose own honesty is worthy all reliance, in his "Memoirs of the Wesley Family," published in 1824, copies frequently from Dr. Whitehead; acknowledges him as good authority; quotes his language; commends his treatment of subjects; and alludes to his access to ORIGINAL PAPERS, as giving him a decided advantage over all other biographers. Thus, on page 429, he observes:

"Mr. Charles Wesley's Life, in connection with that of his brother John, has been written by Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore, by Dr. Whitehead, and lately by Dr. Robert Southey, Poet Laureat. Of ALL THESE, Dr. Whitehead's claims the PREFERENCE—as formed from Mr. C. Wesley's DIARY."

Richard Watson.

The Rev. Richard Watson—confessedly one of the ablest men in the history of Methodism—in his "Life of the Rev. John Wesley," a work designed for general circulation, and which, therefore, omits the details interesting to Methodists alone, some forty times respectfully acknowledges his indebtedness to the authority of Dr. Whitehead, and copies whole pages from his work.

Dr. Thomas Jackson, also, in his "Life of Charles Wesley," confesses Dr. Whitehead's authority. So does *Dr. Southey*, in "Wesley, and his Cotemporaries;" although it is certain, from his statement of the resources employed in this production, that he had no knowledge of the *genuine edition* of the work. He gives the title of the *Dublin*, instead of the *London* edition. The Dublin edition was spurious and mutilated. Doubtless, Southey would have valued the original, highly.

The foregoing testimonials, as will be remembered, have relation chiefly to the COMPLETENESS and ACCURACY of this Biography. They illustrate the fidelity, diligence, and skill of our author. They show that his CONDUCT, in execution of his trust, in so far as the production of a FULL AND TRUE RECORD was concerned, was worthy the confidence reposed in him. Indeed, we have *not yet found*, and we note the fact as remarkable, and one which should not be forgotten, *a single denial of its faithfulness.* When, in connection with the abundant acknowledgments of his competency and general integrity; in connection, also, with the special and honorable responsibility of his appointment; in connection, also, with the richness of his materials—such as no other biographer has to this day possessed:—1. His Personal Knowledge; 2. John Wesley's Manuscripts; 3. Charles Wesley's Manuscripts; 4. The Manuscripts of the Wesley Family; 5. Their Correspondence; 6. His access to all cotemporary Living Authorities; and, 7. to the Current Literature connected with Methodism—and especially to all the publications of the Wesleys; when, in connection with all these things, we are reminded of the fact that he prepared his Work under the pressure of controversy, and knew that it would be subjected to searching criticism as soon as it should appear, we feel that he had every motive and every qualification to perform it well. Did Southey complain of some of the Wesleyan Biographers, that "they wanted *heart*, or *intellect?*" What then? Properly understood, his censures rest not on Whitehead—for Southey never saw his book. But here is the whole book, word for word, just as the author published it. Let any one read this—and say what is wanting.

Having thus noticed the points proposed, in relation to our Author, let us now consider the controversy in which he was involved, and do what we can toward a just conclusion of it. Here we propose to examine the SUBJECT and CAUSES of the Controversy; *the* CHARACTER *of the other* PARTIES *in it; the* MODE *in which it has been* CONDUCTED; and the PRINCIPLES and TERMS on which it ought NOW to be DECIDED.

I. SUBJECTS OF THE CONTROVERSY.

It is of the greatest importance to have a precise understanding of this point. Let it be remembered, then, that Dr. Whitehead was entrusted with the Manuscripts and Correspondence of the Wesley Family in general, to supply him with materials for his work. These must be divided into two classes, which were received from different sources, and on different terms. The *first* class consists of John Wesley's papers, alone; the *second*, of Charles Wesley's, and those of other members of the Family. John Wesley's papers, as before shown, were left, by Will, to Thomas Coke, Dr. Whitehead, and Henry Moore, to be burnt, or published, as they should see good. These papers, with the consent of Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore, were committed to Dr. Whitehead, alone. The others, of course, were in the possession of Charles Wesley's relatives and friends. From these persons, Dr. Whitehead received them, not as a

bequest from the dead, but merely in manifestation of the confidence of surviving kindred. The *first class only* is involved in this controversy.

With this distinction, we proceed to state the subjects of controversy, according to the substantial agreement of the parties. They were the three following:—

1. The *Compensation* to be rendered Dr. Whitehead for writing the Life of *John* Wesley.

2. The *Right of Judgment* in the preparation of *John* Wesley's Life for the Press.

3. The *Right* to the *Possession* and *Use* of *John* Wesley's *Manuscripts*, when it was ascertained that the parties could not agree on the second subject, above stated.

It appears that the *first* of these subjects was withdrawn; Dr. Whitehead offering "to give them the WHOLE PROFITS of the work, if they desired it, in order to put an end to the difference."

The *second* remained. The difference, in relation to it, was this: The Conference party "required" that the Doctor "should publish nothing in the Life of Mr. *John* Wesley, but what should be approved by a Committee of the Preachers." The Doctor, on the other hand, while he "offered to read the manuscript to them as friends, and to consult them on particular parts of Mr. Wesley's life—insisted on the right of using" his "own judgment, if on any point" they "could not agree." This difference was never reconciled. The Doctor "could not in conscience" submit to the requisition; and his opponents would not abandon it.

The *third* subject, also, remained; being essentially involved in the *second*. The papers were already in the Doctor's possession. And just here, an important variance occurs, in the testimony of the parties. On the Doctor's side, it is asserted, that his Associate-Trustees "deliberately agreed that" he "should have the use of them to assist him in executing his work," and that they were "delivered UNCONDITIONALLY to him for that end." On the other side, Mr. Moore declares, that they were "deposited with him, under an EXPRESS STIPULATION that they should be examined according to the Will of the Testator, previously to any of them being published."

We confess a difficulty here. The parties are in direct opposition. How shall we overcome it? We might raise the question of veracity—which shall we believe, Dr. Whitehead, or Mr. Moore? But we have too much respect for both parties, to press this. We always have a horror of such appeals. What then? The difficulty must be left unsettled, or an error must be supposed. There are two reasons for the supposition of an error. The *first* is, that Dr. Whitehead acknowledges that, *after* the papers were "delivered unconditionally" to him, Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore "*changed their minds on that subject*"—i. e. became opposed to his unconditional possession and discretional use of them. Now, if we may suppose that Mr. Moore *forgot* this fact—thought their opposition was manifested in the beginning instead of afterward—and that a stipulation was then actually made, instead of some subsequent efforts to secure one—the difficulty may be subdued. The *second* reason for supposing an error, is in favor of exactly such an error as has been described. That is, that while the Doctor's statement was published *at the time*, in the *freshness of the facts*, in the *presence of his opponents*, and, as far as we have seen, *without contradiction*—Mr. Moore's was not published until some *thirty years afterward*, and when the Doctor had been *twenty years in his grave*. Unless some such error be admitted, we must abandon this issue as indeterminable. If it be admitted, it is in Dr. Whitehead's favor.

It is evident enough, however, from the following passage, that Mr. Moore relied upon his statement, whether erroneous or correct. "But," he remarks, that which constituted "the Doctor's indelible dishonor, was his ABSOLUTE REFUSAL to suffer the MSS., with which he had been intrusted, to be examined according to the Will of the Testator. This effrontery and injustice of the man utterly confounded those with whom he had entered into the former engagements." And yet, that his reliance may have been vain, is also evident from the manifest incorrectness of this charge. Dr.

Whitehead did *not* "*absolutely* refuse" to suffer the MSS. to be examined. His refusal was *conditional.* This is plain from the very *first item* in the "Proposals" presented to the Conference "to show the disinterestedness of Dr. Whitehead and of this Committee, and their desire of peace," and to "make some sacrifices for the sake thereof." It reads thus:

"That all the Manuscripts of Mr. Wesley shall be *fairly* and *impartially examined* by Dr. Coke, Mr. Moore, and Dr. Whitehead. Such papers as they shall *unanimously* deem unfit for publication, shall be burnt immediately; out of the remainder Dr. Whitehead shall be at liberty to select such as he thinks necessary for his work; and the residue to be given into the hands of Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore."

The "Proposals" were rejected by the Conference; but, as long as they remain on record, the one above cited will utterly disprove the assertion, that Dr. Whitehead "*absolutely* refused" to suffer the MSS. to be examined. It was a *conditional* refusal; though we cannot but confess the condition was exceedingly stringent, and requires strong reasons to justify it. We shall see, ultimately, whether such reasons existed.

These, then, were the subjects of controversy. Dr. Whitehead, having got the possession of *John* Wesley's Manuscripts, conditionally or unconditionally, to assist him in writing the Life for which he was pledged to the public, asserted his right to keep and use them, for that purpose, according to his own judgment—not even allowing an examination of them, by his Associate-Trustees, except on conditions to which they would not consent. Dr. Coke, Mr. Moore, and the Conference denounced this action on his part, as a flagrant violation of Mr. Wesley's Will, and in all respects dishonorable. Now, therefore, let us proceed to the next point:

II.—Causes of the Controversy.

The reader will agree with us, we presume, that it would have been a silly plan to confine the proposed Biography to the character and course of John Wesley, exclusively. His brother Charles had nearly equal claims. Methodism, in whole, had claims. Dr. Whitehead was entrusted with the resources of all; and remembered all; and resolved to give place to all; and to exercise his own judgment in respect of all. If any were aggrieved by this announcement, who were they? The Methodists in general? No. The Wesley Family, in general? No. The relatives of Charles Wesley, in particular? No. The relatives of John Wesley? No. Who, then, were they? Dr. Coke, Mr. Moore, and the Conference. How was it that *they* were so aggrieved? If any of the Wesleys had been likely to suffer injury, were there no nearer representatives to show their sensibility on the occasion, and come forward to prevent the result? How shall we account for the fact, that they all remained silent, and, as far as we can judge, perfectly satisfied? Surely, if any detriment had been anticipated to the fair fame of their illustrious kindred, they would have appeared in their behalf. Would *they* not have demanded of Dr. Whitehead the surrender of *Charles* Wesley's *Private Diary?*—and all the other *Manuscripts* which *they* had committed to his care? Does not the fact that they took no part in the dispute, imply that they saw no cause of offence?—that they had as much confidence in Dr. Whitehead as ever?—that they had no objection to his exercising his own judgment in the work? Why then, we again ask, were Dr. Coke, Mr. Moore, and the Conference, so much aggrieved that this same judgment was to be exercised upon *John* Wesley's papers? Did they think he would falsify them? That never has been pretended. Did they think the papers themselves would bring reproach on Mr. Wesley? They had little reason for this—even if they had not known that such a sun might wear a spot and yet be a blessing to the world. Or, lastly, did they—or rather did some of them—one or more individuals—imagine that these papers might reveal something not altogether creditable to themselves?—something that would

interfere with their memories and hopes? This last inquiry, we think, will lead to an understanding of the truth.

It would seem that the Doctor's determination, as stated by Mr. Moore, "that he would write the Life of Mr. Wesley *as an independent man*," was the reason why "Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore changed their mind" in relation to his "discretional use" of the manuscripts. The Doctor's own statement, as before quoted, was, that he "had determined to write, not only the Life of Mr. Wesley, but *a history of Methodism*, with the *utmost impartiality*; to describe things as they *have been*, and as they *are*, without the *false colouring* that the *spirit of a party* will always give to history"—to describe "*facts* that have taken place in the *establishment* of Methodism, and to distinguish between the *rational* and *liberal* principles of Mr. Wesley, on which the Methodist Societies were founded, and the *narrow* and *arbitrary* conduct of *a few individuals*."

Do not the above statements reveal the general cause of the uneasiness? If there were persons who had not yet become wise enough to love Christianity more than Methodism, and Christ more than men, and truth more than place, they had reason to be afraid, even of their Founder's MSS., and the honest judgment of his Biographer. Who the "*few individuals*" were, we cannot certainly say. It is remarkable, that "*a few individuals*" are almost always the wrong-doers and mischief-makers. It is plain, however, that Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore were among them. We suppose these to have been the principal ones. And, until the incidental confirmation of the fact, in the sequel of this inquiry, we can now only assert, in general terms, that the causes of the controversy will be found in personal and official improprieties which they and others were unwilling to have exposed. Before Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore shall be presented, however, for special contemplation, or the improprieties alluded to shall be particularly considered, it becomes us to notice the *mode* in which the controversy has been *conducted*.

III.—Mode of the Controversy.

It appears that Dr. Whitehead was not without friends. He mentions a "Committee, united with" him "to put an end to the dispute." Mr. Moore styles it a "Committee to advise, support, and defend Dr. Whitehead." By this Committee, the "Proposals," published in our Author's "Advertisement," were made to the Conference. We have no evidence as to the course they pursued after the rejection of these "Proposals." The Doctor's prosecution of the matter is to be gathered from his work—which he proceeded to complete. In his "Preface," however, he intimates that he was on his guard against the evil of impairing the permanent usefulness of the "Life," by introducing what ought to have been a transient variance. He thought his opponents tried to provoke such an injury, and therefore laid his task aside whenever he "could not write with that calmness and ease that he wished." Still, *in* the "Preface," he represented the opposition to him as "cruel," "malignant," "outrageous and indecent." And from the work, itself, it is clear, that he believed the causes of the opposition to be such as are stated in the close of the preceding section. Instead, therefore, of concealing these "improprieties," he has disclosed them. He has recorded his opinion of the ambition of a few of the leading preachers; the facts and documents confirming it; and the evil effects resulting from that ambition, and likely to be perpetuated and multiplied. He has showed how Charles Wesley retired from the Itinerancy, chiefly because of his aversion to the increasing inclination to independency, and the opposition of the ambitious projectors of that scheme to him, on that account; how these same persons betrayed John Wesley, in his old age, for the accomplishment of their purpose, into the chief inconsistencies of his life; and how, after the death of their Founder, the Government of the Preachers became oppressive to the People. Having stated, near the close of his Life of Charles Wesley, that the

latter foresaw the approach of the government of the societies "towards a system of human policy, that in the end could not be carried on without sometimes having recourse to the arts of misrepresentation and deception, which "he abhorred in all persons, but when practised under the mask of religion—always appeared to him more detestable"—the Doctor declares for himself, near the close of his Life of the elder brother, that—"What is still much worse than all the rest, is, that the present system of government among the Methodists, requires such arts of human policy and chicanery to carry it on, as, in my opinion, are totally inconsistent with the openness of gospel simplicity." He could not conclude the latter paragraph, however, without adding: "It is happy that the great body of the preachers do not enter into the spirit of it, and indeed know little about it, being content with doing their duty on the circuits to which they are appointed, and promoting the spiritual welfare of the people. And the hope is, that this mode of government will soon be altered." So rests the Doctor's management of the controversy.

The other party have conducted it in this manner: Determined not to sanction Dr. Whitehead's work, they appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore to compile a Life. This appointment was quickly fulfilled; the Life published, in advance of the Doctor's; and, according to Myles, one edition, of ten thousand copies, "sold in a few weeks, and another edition published when the Conference assembled." This was in 1792. It is further stated, by the same author, that in this work "no mention was made of" the "unhappy dispute, nor even a hint given of it." Mr. Myles, himself, however, in his record of the dispute, represents the Doctor as "unfaithful;" "extravagant in his demands;" taking "advantage" of the "Committee;" and submitting "Proposals" to the Conference, manifesting "injustice and total want of ingenuousness, as well as —unfaithfulness to the deceased." We copy from the Third Edition of Myles' Work, published in London, 1803. In 1805, it appears, that a spurious and mutilated edition of Dr. Whitehead's work was published in Dublin, "which omitted all those passages that were unpalatable to Dr. Coke and the high Conference party." The Author had died in the preceding year; and it would seem that the design was, as quickly after that event as possible, to substitute the perfect book by an imperfect one; and so suppress the testimony which it embodied. In the "Life of Dr. Coke," by Mr. Drew, published in 1817, we find the next record of the controversy; where it is so stated as again to discredit the honor of Dr. Whitehead. It is manifest, however, that Mr. Drew, in this particular, was merely the reporter of the party; not even having seen the genuine edition of our author's work. In 1824, Mr. Moore's Life of the Wesleys appeared. It will be remembered that he was united with Dr. Coke, in the hasty preparation of the Life published in advance of our author's. In the "Preface" to this later and deliberate work—a work published *twenty years after Dr. Whitehead's decease*—Mr. Moore revives the controversy. It is not too much to say that he abuses his long-buried antagonist, as if pleased with the opportunity and assured of safety. He represents him as having fallen into a mercenary "*temptation;*" as being "*indelibly dishonored;*" as guilty of astounding "*effrontery* and *injustice;*" as departing "from *simplicity* and *rectitude;*" as having "*awfully* compromised his character;" and, therefore, "under a feeling of the need of self-defence," losing "no opportunity of *defaming* the Preachers in the Memoirs which he gave to the world;" as hypocritically assuming language and sentiments at variance with his principles, to accomplish his purposes; and acting from a feeling somewhat similar to that of "*gamblers*, among" whom, "it is said, the *loser* is considered as having a privilege to rail." Is not all this, from such a man and at such a date, surprising? But we have not yet done. In the London "Wesleyan Methodist Magazine," for January, February, and March, of the year 1825, we have what may be regarded as the Official Review of the above Official Biography. In the course of this review, Dr. Whitehead is described as having written his work "under the influence of a *weak-*

ened principle of honor"—and "*private pique*"—and a design of "*avenging*" his own "*quarrel* with a part of the preachers"—as being, therefore, "*desecrated*" for his task—as erring "not for want of principle, but for *want of temper*"—as having "*dishonorably deprived*" Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore "of a large portion of valuable papers"—as having composed "under *party bias*, and *not* with the best feeling"—as *not knowing* or not *choosing* to state the proper vindication of Mr. Wesley, &c. &c. And so the controversy has been brought down to the present time. Both in England and in the United States, the successors of the Coke, Moore, and Conference party, give similar representations of our author to this day.

Before we leave this section, we wish to show the circumstances under which this is done. If the Journal to which we have alluded, in connection with the HISTORY of Dr. Whitehead, was correct in the assertion—which we have not seen proved—that he was expelled from the Society for unfaithfulness as a Trustee of Mr. Wesley's Manuscripts—it is *certain* that he was received again and restored to his former standing; and this, as far as appears, without any acknowledgment, on his part, of guilt in the matter. Mr. Myles says: "In the year 1797, a *reconciliation* took place between the Doctor and his London friends, chiefly through the mediation of Mr. Pawson. He is *now* [i. e. in 1803] *united* to the Society, *restored to his office* of Local Preacher, and *very friendly* with his brethren." Mr. Drew, in his "Life of Dr. Coke," says: "The reach was afterward *completely healed;* and *both works* continue to be sold by the Conference." Mr. Moore is *silent* about this. As to "*both* works"—Coke and Moore's and Dr. Whitehead's—*continuing* "to be sold by the Conference"—we think Mr. Drew must have been misinformed. It is hardly credible that the Conference *ever* sold the *London*, or *genuine* edition of our author's work. Mr. Drew, as already stated, was not acquainted with that edition—at least, it is highly probable he was not. He must have referred to the *Dublin*, or *spurious* edition; and if he did, and if it be a fact that this has been always kept on sale by the Conference, the party by whom it was published is pretty well identified. These, then, are the circumstances to which we have alluded. Although Dr. Whitehead was reunited to the Society and restored to his office, and died in these connections; although his own work was suppressed—as the *sixth* item in his "Proposals" to the Conference, shows he was afraid it would be—and another, expurgated of offensive intelligence, substituted in its place, and, if Mr. Drew be correct, sold by the Conference as his own, as if in demonstration of the fact that the "breach was *completely* healed,"—he continues to be thus berated to this hour.

In the height of the controversy, the Doctor thus addressed the Preachers:—"I therefore entreat you, for God's sake, for the sake of peace among the people, for the honor of religion in general, to desist from this arbitrary and illiberal requisition. If you still insist upon it, and make a breach on this account, I call the living God to witness between me and you this day, that I am clear; the mischief that may follow, will lie at your door, not mine; *and you shall answer for it, at the awful tribunal of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*"

Now we have faith in a retributive system, already in operation; the agents of which are sometimes very humble persons. And it seems to us, that the time has come for a development of its equity and efficiency. Let us call up, therefore, Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore, and see, on examination, if they are the men to cast dishonor on Dr. Whitehead.

IV.—Character of the other Parties.

We proceed to the part of our duty now before us, with an awakening of the sensibility acknowledged in the opening of this Introduction. It is a pleasure to vindicate the memory of one unjustly reproached; but painful, however necessary, to do it at the expense of others—especially of persons deservedly revered. And yet, to the

student of human nature, it is but a primer-lesson, that the best and most useful of men may be subject to unworthy and mischievous infirmities. Is it not wrong for a Biographer to conceal these? Besides, as was said of the sun, in connection with Mr. Wesley, so here it may be said of the next great light—may not the moon show its spots and yet be a blessing to the world? But, further, suppose that injured innocence *requires* the exhibition of such infirmities, for its own justification—can any man, however charitable, be so unrighteous as to withhold them? Perhaps a *man* might—but a CHRISTIAN cannot. Let us, then, pass on:

1. *Dr. Coke.*

Since writing the preceding section, we have carefully examined the materials in our possession respecting the character of Dr. Coke. This examination reassures us of the correctness of our judgment in relation to it. His distinguishing infirmity was —*ambition to be a Bishop.*

That he was ambitious, is admitted by his friends and advocates. In the following sentence, the testimony of Mr. Drew is confirmed by Mr. Moore: "He was, as his biographer acknowledges, naturally ambitious and aspiring; and, for some years, had made great efforts to obtain preferment in the church; but finding himself disappointed, and at length shut up in the curacy of South Petherton, in Somersetshire, he became very unhappy, and felt the want of that real good, which, as yet, was unknown to him." So, again, Mr. Moore affirms, that, in contemplation of his new field of usefulness, labor and suffering, "'the ambitious stirrings' which Mr. Southey has imputed to Mr. Wesley, (not only without, but contrary to, all evidence,) were realized in the active mind of Dr. Coke." Now, we see plainly, that this natural tendency was sanctified, by the grace of God, to many glorious purposes. While we have reposed here, bodily, in our comfortable study, we have followed him, spiritually, through all his career, with increased wonder. Eighteen times, he crossed the Atlantic; nine times, traversed the States on our coast; and four times, the West Indies; besides all his journeyings in England, Ireland, and Scotland: visited France and Holland: preached everywhere; begged money from door to door; lavished his own liberal fortune; raised up Missionary Societies; flew away, and established missions in every quarter of the globe; was smitten by tempests at sea; captured by foes; set ashore, alone; hunted by ninety men at once; waited for, in ambush, by a deadly marksman; underwent all difficulties, and surmounted all—until, as though his soul, rather than his body, needed room for rest, the ocean opened to receive him. "To his enthusiastic admirers," says Mr. Drew, "he seemed to want nothing but wings to become an angel." Nay, he *had* wings, and *was* an angel. Neither Wesley nor Whitefield equalled him in their range of labors. In the language of Watson, "by his voyages, travels and labors, he erected a monument of noble and disinterested zeal and charity, which will never be obliterated." In the language of Southey, "Having wholly given himself up to the Connection, the second place in it was naturally assigned to him; no other of its active members was possessed of equal fortune and rank in society; and all that he had, his fortune, to every shilling, and his life, to every minute that could be employed in active exertions, were devoted to its interests." But, while we see so plainly that his ambition was sanctified, in great part, to noble ends, we cannot help seeing that it was also, in part, allied to little things—meanly and mischievously devoted to them. Among these, we specify these three: monumental distinction; literary authority; and Episcopal title and power. In respect of the first, we allude to *Cokesbury College.* It seems that this was planned on his first voyage to America; as Mr. Drew states, that, "the *establishment*" of it, he "had always kept in view from his first landing." This institution was twice destroyed by fire—the loss amounting to about $50,000. After the first burning, Mr. Asbury—whose name was nearly buried in its title—abandoned the enter-

prise, as one contrary to the Divine will. After the second burning, Dr. Coke did the same. This affair gave Mr. Wesley no little distress: not the burning, nor yet the building, but, the *naming*, and the *ambition* indicated by it. Said he, writing to Mr. Asbury, before the burning—"In one point, my dear brother, I am a little afraid, both the Doctor and you differ from me. I study to be *little;* you study to be *great.* I *creep;* you *strut* along. I found a *school;* you a *college!* Nay, and call it after your own names! O beware! Do not seek to be *something!* Let me be nothing, and *Christ be all in all!*" In respect of the second specification—literary authority, we allude to the fact that he published works, *not his own, as his own.* The following list of works, composed, in part or whole, for him, and published with his name alone—"Thomas Coke, LL.D.," as their author, is copied from the "Life, Character, and Literary Labors of Samuel Drew, A. M.," by his eldest son:—

A Commentary on the New Testament. 2 vols. 4to. 1807.

The Recent Occurrences of Europe, Considered in Relation to Prophecy, &c. 1808.

A History of the West Indies, Natural, Civil, and Ecclesiastical, &c.—3 vols. 1808—11.

A History of the Old and New Testaments (a part only published)—1809.

Six Letters, in Reply to Rev. Melville Horne, &c.—1810.

The Cottager's Bible, &c.—4to. 1810.

Besides these, actually published, Mr. Drew gives the titles of two others, in MS. —one, A Series of Letters, and the other, A System of Natural Philosophy. Of them all, he asserts, that his Father "was virtually or principally the author." Yet, ostensibly, the Commentator—the Historian—the Controversialist—the Philosopher—was no other than Dr. Coke. We have read the apologies for this course; but think they might as well have been omitted, as far as the judgment of honest men is concerned. We like better the honesty of Dr. Clarke, who, in the "Preface" to his own Commentary, states the simple facts, without apology, in relation to what is called Dr. Coke's Commentary—one of the works named, in part, in the foregoing List. Dr. Clarke says—"This is *in the main* a *reprint* of the work of *Dr. Dodd*"—"The *major part* of the *notes* and even the *dissertations* of Dr. Dodd, are here *re-published without the author's name.*" Book-stealing, sermon-stealing, and all other *pious frauds,* we are under solemn obligation to expose, for the honor of "*pure* and *undefiled* religion."

In respect of the third specification, we allude to facts which few men will have the hardihood either to deny or approve. Only let it be remembered that Dr. Coke's friends acknowledge his "ambitious stirrings," and that Mr. Moore testifies that, "for some *years*" he "had made *great efforts* to obtain *preferment* in the *church,*" but was "*disappointed,*" and, therefore, "*unhappy*"—and how naturally do these facts follow! Our limits allow merely the briefest enumeration of them:

1. *The Bristol Ordination.* In a private chamber, in Bristol, England, and in a manner so studiously concealed, that even Charles Wesley, who was in Bristol at the time, "at his" brother's "elbow," had not the "least hint" of it; Dr. Coke, then about thirty-seven years of age, and only a few years a Methodist, received, in compl ance with his own "earnest wish," from Mr. Wesley, then in his eighty-second year, and himself only a Presbyter, an ordination or appointment, as joint-superintendent with Mr. Asbury, over the Methodists of America.

2. *The Baltimore Ordination.* In the same year (1784) and in less than four months from his own appointment, having crossed the sea, travelled extensively, and assembled a Conference at Baltimore, Dr. Coke ordained Mr. Asbury. The parties afterward assumed the title of *Bishop,* and the brethren in whole were organised as the Methodist *Episcopal* Church.

3. *The Application to Bishop White.* In a little more than six years from the time of the Baltimore Ordination, as though dissatisfied with his powers, Dr. Coke

applied to Bishop White, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, substantially if not expressly, for re-ordination. He declared, in his letter, that the re-union of the Methodists with the Episcopalians, as proposed, would hardly be submitted to, if the ordination of the Preachers should be made to depend either on "the *present* Bishops" or "their *successors*." Of course, he meant that *he* should be consecrated; and, probably, he *alone*—for he stated his opinion that Mr. Asbury would not "easily comply;" adding, "nay, I know he will be exceedingly averse to it."

4. *Conduct on hearing of Mr. Wesley's Death.* While the above proposition was pending, the Dr. heard of Mr. Wesley's death. His biographer's account of his conduct, on this occasion, is marvellous. Let it be remembered, that one of Charles Wesley's fears, in connection with the Ordination of Dr. Coke, by his brother, was, that the Dr., after organising the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, would return to attempt a similar organization in England. Mr. Asbury was the acknowledged head in America; and deserved to be. There was no possibility of rising above him, unless by consecration from Bishop White: and even had that been certain, it is scarcely credible that the Methodists generally would have forsaken their old and fast friend, to follow Dr. Coke into the Protestant Episcopal Church. Besides, the Dr. would, doubtless, have preferred Mr. Wesley's place in England to Mr. Asbury's in America. When he heard of Mr. Wesley's death, he was at Port-Royal, in Virginia. He was informed of the melancholy fact, after preaching, at night. He had an appointment, some miles distant, at ten o'clock the next morning. Instead of fulfilling it, he started for the nearest port where he could find a ship sailing for England!—travelled so rapidly that he was made sick, and had to stop; pursued the coach, the next day, on horseback; the next day, was stopped by sickness again; and so lost the opportunity he sought. He then spent nine days in Philadelphia; heard of a vessel at New Castle; hastened thither, and embarked; left the ship, when near the English coast, and was put ashore at Falmouth, by some fishermen! No wonder even his Biographer adds: "*The supposed occasion* of Dr. Coke's arrival in England *at this particular crisis* of the Methodist connection, though *pleasing* to *some*, was *by no means gratifying to all the preachers*." Mr. Drew, indeed, does not let the fact of this unwelcome reception pass, without extolling the Dr.'s general character; but even such of his readers as desire to be "children in malice," cannot make themselves such children "in understanding," as to confound a course like this with the truly glorious career of his subject in other relations.

5. *Letter to the Bishop of London.* Having failed in his application to Bishop White; and in his supposed expectations, on his return to England, after Mr. Wesley's decease; about eight years later, Dr. Coke applied to the Bishop of London, seemingly in hope of attaining his old and cherished object. "Securing the great body of Methodists to the Church of England," was the burden of the Epistle; and the means by which this was to be accomplished, was the ordination of "leading preachers," and, doubtless, himself, particularly, "to travel through the connection," "to administer the sacraments," &c. He was already a Presbyter; and, if re-ordained, could be so only as a Bishop. In this case, however, we confess the evidence is merely circumstantial. We regard it, in connection with what has gone before, and is to come after.

6. *Letter to Wilberforce.* Having failed in the latter, as in all former efforts—in England as in America, another and most remote region opened to his contemplation, in connection with the same object. It was about fourteen years after the letter to the Bishop of London, when he wrote to William Wilberforce, Esq. He assured Mr. Wilberforce that the interests of the "*Indian Empire*" had "lain very near" his "heart—for *at least twelve years*." But, whether the disappointment on his return to England, after Mr. Wesley's death, had any connection with his *first* thoughts of India, it is manifest that these later efforts were prompted by "the observations of

Lord Castlereagh in the House of Commons, concerning a *religious establishment* in India, *connected* with the *established church* at home." In this letter—which is one of the strangest we ever read, and which may be found in the 2d vol. of the "Wilberforce Correspondence," Philadelphia edition, page 114—Dr. Coke speaks plainly of his "appointment to the *Episcopacy* of India," and professes a readiness, in that case, to "return most fully and faithfully into the bosom of the Established Church, and do everything in" his "power to promote its interests," and "*submit to all such restrictions* in the fulfilment of" his "office, as the government and the bench of bishops should think necessary." This last, and also unsuccessful effort, was made a little more than a year prior to his death.

Now, what *can* we say in palliation of these things? Nothing. So far as Dr. Coke's confessed ambition allied itself to these little things—he is to be *pitied*, not approved. He saw the degradation; felt it; struggled against it; apologised for it, by the connection of better things with it; but, being mastered by it, could do nothing more, save *try to hide it*. This, he always did. In the case of the *Bristol Ordination*, he consoled himself thus: "Either it will be *known*, or *not known;* if *not* known, then no odium will arise; but *if known*, you will be obliged to acknowledge that I acted under your (Mr. Wesley's) direction, or suffer me to sink," &c.—See Letter, p. 256, 2d vol. this work. In the case of the *Baltimore Ordination*, notwithstanding he assured Mr. Wesley, in the letter just quoted, that he would go no "further" than he "believed absolutely necessary for the prosperity of the work," he afterwards confessed, in his letter to Bishop White, "I am not sure but I *went further*" than *Mr. Wesley* "did intend," at least: and good reason had he for this; for on his return to England, from that Ordination, Mr. Wesley gave him a cool reception, and the conference left his name off the "minutes" for the ensuing year — in part, it is believed, for this very fault. The feelings of Mr. Wesley, in relation to the matter, are evident enough from his letter to Mr. Asbury, in connection especially with the assumption of the name of *Bishop*—Mr. Asbury, in all probability, not being half as guilty as his associate:—"One instance of this, of your *greatness*, has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you, suffer yourself to be called BISHOP? I shudder, I start at the very thought! Men may call *me* a knave or a fool; a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content: but they shall never, by my consent, call me *Bishop!*" &c. — This transcending of Mr. Wesley's intention was *hidden* before. So, in respect of the proposition to Bishop White, the Dr. stated: "I am conscious of it that *secresy* is of great importance in the present state of the business," &c.—and therefore begged the secret might be kept, and, if the proposal should not be improved, that the letter might be "*burnt*" and "no more notice" taken of it. So, in respect of the letter to Wilberforce, he appeals to the honor of that gentleman, to keep the matter quiet, lest the preachers should come to know it, and thus his usefulness be affected. He cautions him even against Mr. Stephen—the statesman's brother-in-law—lest, if mentioned to him, it should come to the knowledge of the Methodists. Let any one read that letter, and answer, if it does not show a balloonist, who, infatuated by the hope of rising to a tinted vapor, now floating in the sunset, but soon to grow dark and cold, throws out the ballast of personal dignity and worth. For such a man—a man of such unexcelled elements and influences, in many other respects—the "Xavier of Methodism," as Southey styles him, complimenting rather the Romanist than the Methodist by the title—for him so to demean himself under "ambitious stirrings;" and, after having vainly sought preferment in the church for years, in the beginning of life; and then left it in disappointment; to turn back to it again, for the same object, repeatedly, and even to the close of life; and so humble himself and strive to hide his humiliations; and this, when God had opened to him a field which the Archbishop of Canterbury might have envied, and given him

talents wherewith to occupy it, which the whole bench of bishops might have envied —surely it is pitiable enough.

But this statement of Dr. Coke's character seemed to be necessary to the vindication of Dr. Whitehead. Dr. Whitehead knew him; and, without citing all he says against him, it may be made plain enough that he did not admire him. If the reader will turn to the second volume of this work, and examine passages on pages 219, 253, 255, and 284, he will sufficiently understand in what light Dr. Whitehead regarded Dr. Coke. What Charles Wesley thought of him, may be gathered from his letter to his brother, page 265, vol. 2. "His 'Methodist Episcopal Church, at Baltimore,' was *intended*," says Charles, "to beget a 'Methodist Episcopal Church,' here." He was afraid of Dr. Coke's ambition, if not of his brother's.

What then? Is it right to hear only one side of a question? Who has been more abused than Dr. Whitehead? Perhaps not by Dr. Coke, personally. We take pleasure in reading Mr. Drew's remark, that, "from invective, acrimony, and asperity, all his pages are happily free." And yet, Mr. Drew has not informed us how many "all *his* pages" really are, nor where we are to find them. But the party, by whom Dr. Coke was supported, *have* abused Dr. Whitehead; one would think, to their heart's content. Mr. Moore, especially, has done this. We say, then,—ponder the character of Dr. Coke. And, although all the improprieties which have been noticed, were not to be found in the MSS. of John Wesley, let the reader form his own judgment, from what Dr. Whitehead has published, whether there was not reason why Dr. Coke should oppose his "discretional use" of the MSS.—whether things are not here brought to light, which Dr. Coke—according to his habit—would certainly have concealed, had he been permitted so to do.

Now, then, let us pass on to a brief notice of his coadjutor.

2. *Henry Moore.*

A few words here will suffice. Mr. Moore we always regarded, until lately, as one of the most venerable of the Wesleyan Ministers. We mourn bitterly when facts reduce our veneration. But truth remains to be venerated; let its disciples dishonor themselves as they may. We repeat our design to say but little here—though this little may break upon many like unexpected lightning and thunder. First — Mr. Moore is *the* Abuser, *par excellence*, of Dr. Whitehead. Secondly — Here is Dr. Whitehead's Work — two volumes in one—containing about 600 pages in whole. They have been carefully compared with Mr. Moore's Work—as it is called — and out of these 600 pages, there are only 133 which are clear of the marks of Mr. Moore's purloining. Most of them, in whole, or nearly so, "original documents," "references to MSS.," "notes, dissertations, reflections, translations," and facts and pronouns of "personal knowledge"—all, all are transferred from the Abused to the Abuser. For instance: if Dr. Whitehead says—"It appears from the account *I* have given of Mr. Charles Wesley," &c. — Mr. Moore copies it just as it stands, without acknowledgment, and presents it to the world as his own: "It appears from the account *I* have given," &c. — Now is not such conduct intolerable? In his "Preface," Mr. Moore remarks that Dr. Whitehead's "book is still extant, and should be *answered*, though he himself is no longer accountable to men." Is this the way to answer it? We have already noticed Mr. Drew's statement, that "the breach was afterward completely healed; and both works continue to be sold by the Conference." That was a mistake, for it was published before Mr. Moore's Life; and Dr. Whitehead's genuine work, we are persuaded, was never sold by the Conference. But now, wherever *Mr. Moore's* work is sold, it may indeed be said, that, substantially, *both* works are sold.

How *could* Mr. Moore expose himself to such charges as these? Does he not say that his old opponent's work is "still *extant*?" Certainly—but, perhaps, he imagined

so *few* copies to be in existence, that he would never be detected. We have mentioned the Official Review of his work in the London "Wesleyan Methodist Magazine," for 1825. The Reviewer tells a different story. He seems to let out the secret. "The *spirit of party*," he observes, "kept this work alive for *the time;* but it may be considered *as long since dead.*" Was not this the real reason?

But a dead book, like a dead man, may live again. Buried, burnt, torn, its elements scattered over the world, its name forgotten by the world, still, like a man subjected to the same accidents, it may rise again. Nor only so: but, if a good book, it may rise, like a good man, in spiritual and imperishable power and glory. Do not the changes which have passed upon Dr. Whitehead's work confirm and illustrate these statements? *Born*—to preserve the figure—in 1793, it was declared, in thirty-two years afterward, "*long since dead;*" and yet, twenty years after that declaration, in this rapid, stereotype succession of large, beautiful, and popular editions, we witness the wonder of its triumphant resurrection. And now, in the revelations of the ante-judgment, who is there to confront it, without fear and shame?

In one word, in view of what has been said respecting the two chief opponents of Dr. Whitehead—are they the men to cast reproach on him? If not—who are?

V.—Principles and Terms on which the Controversy may be decided.

We designed to dwell somewhat at large on these—so ardent is our desire for justice, mercy, and peace. But we are warned of limits that cannot be transgressed. What then? *Much in little* is our only resort.

Let the *facts* be settled, and the *truth* acknowledged, whoever suffers. It is merely a suffering of reputation, and that in one point among many which cannot suffer, and that, for the advantage of posterity. Our faith is, that Dr. Whitehead, Dr. Coke, and Mr. Moore, ascended, successively, to heaven; that they repose together there, in blissful release from the infirmities which spotted their orbs while filling their social circles here. We have thought of the living as well as the dead, of eternity as well as time, and have endeavored to do our duty. If anything has been mis-stated, the next edition shall correct it. We would not wilfully mis-state, for the world. It is plain, that though there were *three Trustees*, there were but *two parties*. Dr. Whitehead represented one; his Associates, the other. They wished to destroy; he, to save. They, to conceal; he, to expose. They had given him the materials, without knowing his design and firmness, expecting, it would seem, to control his work; he, understanding their character and purposes, refused to surrender his advantage. His work tells the rest. Did he right, or wrong? If even wrong, in that respect, is not his work still trustworthy? Shall he, then, be anathematised and his opponents sainted? Who does not see that the only way to settle the matter is, to make allowance for natural infirmities and party infirmities all round — give Dr. Whitehead equal representation in Wesleyan literature with the other Biographers—and let the Methodists and the world, on due examination, render their righteous judgment of his merits. We are sure, he will stand as highly, in such a result, as any of his compeers. His work has never been superseded; nor can it ever be. It is the *original* work—the *foundation* work, on which others have built — the *standard* Life of John and Charles Wesley.

January, 1845.

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED

AT THE NEW CHAPEL IN THE CITY-ROAD, LONDON,

ON THE NINTH OF MARCH, 1791,

AT THE FUNERAL

OF THE

REVEREND JOHN WESLEY.

And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works follow them.—Rev. xiv. 13.

BY JOHN WHITEHEAD, M.D.

Know ye not that there is a Prince, and a great man fallen this day in Israel? II. Samuel iii. 38.

I shall observe only on this passage of scripture, that the Hebrew word which is rendered prince, sometimes signifies a leader, and sometimes a person of superior or princely qualities. In this general sense the passage may be applied to that eminent servant of God, of whose character I am now to speak. This is all the use that I shall make of the words; I consider them as a motto only to the discourse which I intend to deliver.

When we consider the public character of the late Rev. Mr. Wesley; the various opinions which have been entertained concerning him; the extent of his labours; the influence which he had over a large body of people; and the prevalence of his sentiments, not in these only, but in other nations; it becomes a matter of some importance to inquire the leading features of his character, both as a man, and as a minister of the gospel.

I. Although the acquisition of human learning has been little esteemed by some religious people; yet it is of very considerable service to a minister of the gospel. The knowledge of the languages, and of the arts and sciences, is not only an ornament to the mind, but it enlarges the human faculties; it improves the understanding; gives a habit of thinking closely and reasoning justly; and prepares the mind, when under a proper direction, for great attainments even in religion. These advantages Mr. Wesley possessed in a high degree, and he knew well how to improve them to the most useful purposes in his ministerial labours. His mind was richly furnished with literature in its various branches: he was well read in the ancient, and several modern tongues. In the learned languages he was a critic; and must have studied them with peculiar pleasure in his youth, or he could not have made that progress in classical learning, which so justly raised him to a distinguished rank as a scholar. It has been acknowledged by men who were good judges, and no great friends to Mr. Wesley, that when at college he gave proofs of a fine classical taste: and there are some poems which he wrote at that time, that show that he had formed his taste on the best models of antiquity. Those who were much in his company, and who heard his apt and pointed quotations from the Greek and Roman classics, on the various occasions which occurred in travelling and conversation, could not but be sensible that he read them as a critic, that he admired their style, and entered into their spirit, and was

delighted with their beauties.—He has selected some pieces from the Roman classics; and as he travelled, he would sometimes read them for his amusement.

But he did not confine his studies of this kind to profane literature: sacred learning likewise occupied much of his time and attention. He was well read in the Hebrew scriptures; and in the original language of the New Testament he was an able critic, and so conversant with it, that sometimes, when he has evidently been at a loss to repeat a passage out of the New Testament in the words of our common translation, he was never at a loss to repeat it in the original Greek; the words seemed to flow without the least difficulty or hesitation, and he was always correct in reciting them; which made it evident, that the words and phrases of the original were more familiar to him than the words of any translation.

The works of God in the creation, afford another fruitful source of instruction and pleasure to an inquiring mind; and the five volumes which he published on *Natural Philosophy*, show how well he had studied that branch of knowledge. He did not study the higher branches of the mathematics; but he esteemed the knowledge of this science of great importance in the improvement of the mind. It forms a person to a habit of close attention to a subject, and of thinking and reasoning justly upon it. And he applied himself to the study of it in his youth, so far as to make himself master of Sir Isaac Newton's Principia, and his theory of light and colours.

The *Art of Logic* was another branch of science, which he had cultivated with the utmost attention and care. It has been universally acknowledged that he was a master in it. But logic, in his view of it, is not what has been commonly so called in the schools: it is not the art of wrangling, nor of making frivolous distinctions, often without a difference. Logic, according to him, is common sense improved by art; or in his own words, "The art of good sense; the art of comprehending things clearly; of judging truly; and of reasoning conscientiously: or, in another view of it, the art of learning and teaching."

If we take a view of his conduct in the early part of life, we shall find that he paid a strict attention to religion: his character was moral from early youth; he always reverenced God and his sacred word: he was attentive to the forms of religion, and so far as he at that time understood it, he was conscientious and regular in the practice of all its duties.

If we consider his qualifications for inquiring after truth, we shall find that he possessed every requisite to examine a subject, that we could expect or wish a man to have: a strong natural understanding, highly cultivated, and well stored with the knowledge of languages, and of the various arts and sciences; he had a reverence for God; he was conscientious in all his ways, and intent upon discovering the truth in every thing that became the subject of his inquiries. And he had firmness and resolution to embrace truth wherever he found it, however unfashionable it might appear. This is not the case with all men of learning: many persons persuade themselves that they are searching after truth; but if they meet with it dressed in a different form to that under which they have been accustomed to consider it, they are ashamed of it. This cannot be said of Mr. Wesley; cautious in his inquiries, he sought truth from the love of it, and whenever he found it, had firmness to embrace it, and publicly to avow it. These are evidences of a strong and liberal mind, possessed of every requisite to prosecute inquiries after truth.

This is a just representation of him; for, notwithstanding the extent of his knowledge, the seriousness of his devotion, and the regularity of his conduct; and although at this time he gave all he had to feed and clothe the poor, and was not only blameless in the eye of the world, but in many things excelled; yet, after a diligent and patient examination of the scriptures, he became sensible that all he knew and all he did, was insufficient to reconcile him to God: he became sensible that all he could do, could never atone for one sin. I will give you his own words; which he wrote, not

by way of ostentation, but of humiliation; and to awaken reflection, if possible, in the minds of those who might think of themselves as he had formerly thought of himself.

"Are they read in philosophy? so was I. In ancient or modern tongues? so was I also. Are they versed in the science of Divinity? I too have studied it many years. Can they talk fluently on spiritual things? the very same could I do. Are they plenteous in alms? Behold! I gave all my goods to feed the poor. Do they give their labour as well as their substance? I have laboured more abundantly than they all. Are they willing to suffer for their brethren? I have thrown up my friends, reputation, and ease. I have put my life in my hand. I have given my body to be parched up with heat, consumed with toil and weariness, or whatever God should please to bring upon me. But does this make me acceptable to God? Does all I ever did or can *know*, *say*, *give*, *do*, or *suffer*, justify me in his sight? By no means. If the oracles of God are true; if we are still to abide by the law and the testimony; all these things, though, when enabled by faith in Christ, they are holy, just, and good; yet without it are dung and dross. This then I have learned, that, having nothing in or of myself to plead, I have no hope but that if I seek I shall find Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

These were the thoughts he had of himself, when his understanding was opened to the view of gospel truths; when he began to see the purity and holiness of God and his own sinfulness; notwithstanding all the excellencies he had to plead in the opinion of others.

This opinion was not taken up rashly: no doubt many of his friends, when they heard him speak in this manner, thought him beside himself: when they considered his former manner of life, and his regularity in every part of his conduct, and heard him say that he was a sinner, a sinner under the wrath of God, a sinner that stood in need of mercy; they looked upon him as almost insane. But this opinion of himself was the result of the most mature inquiry; it was not an enthusiastic notion, the effect of a heated imagination; it was a conviction of his mind founded on a scriptural and rational view of the nature of God, and of his own state. Consider, what I have been observing of his qualifications to inquire after truth: a man of a strong understanding, of a cultivated mind, accustomed to the habit of reasoning, accustomed to investigate every thing in the most cautious manner before he drew his conclusions: and tell me if this be the conduct of an enthusiast? If it be the character of one that takes up things rashly; that follows the dictates of a wild imagination? Will any man calmly affirm this? We must say, that this opinion of himself was not formed in any such way. He tells us, that after conversing with people of experience, he sat down and read his Greek Testament over, with a view to the grand and leading doctrines of justification: he could not be satisfied with any thing less than this: he proceeded upon conviction in every step that he took. And could any man proceed with more caution, or take wiser methods to guard against error, in a matter of such importance to his own comfort and happiness, and to the peace and comfort of others? And here we may again trace the marks of a great and liberal mind; when he saw the truth, he embraced it, though it condemned himself. This is not the case with all: how many see the truth and shrink from it! He, on the contrary, embraced it, though it condemned him; and though he knew the profession of it would expose him to ridicule, and contempt, and reproach. Is it possible for any man to give a stronger proof than this, that he acts from conviction, and from a love of what he conceives to be the truth? Had all those who have read Mr. Wesley's writings, or heard him preach, acted with the same sincerity and firmness that he did, the number of converts would have been much more numerous.

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II. We shall now take a view of his religious sentiments. He made up his mind upon the doctrines which he taught in the most cautious manner, examining the scrip-

tures continually, never adopting any opinion without evidence from scripture and reason. So far was he from following a heated imagination, or taking up opinions as an enthusiast, that he maintained we ought to use our understanding, compare one thing with another, and draw just conclusions from such comparisons, as well in matters of religion as in other things. It is in this sense he uses the word reason when he says, "There are many that utterly decry the use of reason in religion, nay, that condemn all reasoning concerning the things of God, as utterly destructive of true religion; but we can in no wise agree with this. We find no authority for it in holy writ. So far from it, that we find there both our Lord and his apostles reasoning continually with their opposers. Neither do we know in all the productions of ancient and modern times such a chain of reasoning and argumentation, so close, so solid, so regularly connected, as the epistle to the Hebrews. And the strongest reasoner whom we have ever observed, excepting Jesus Christ of Nazareth only, was that Paul of Tarsus; the same who has left this plain direction for all Christians, 'In malice or wickedness be ye children; but in understanding, or reason, be ye men.'"

Hence it is evident, that Mr. Wesley deemed it necessary to use his reason in searching into the things of God. He read the Scriptures, and used his understanding in the best manner he could, to comprehend their meaning. He formed his religious principles in this way; he examined every step he took, and admitted no doctrine, nor any interpretation of Scripture, but what appeared to him to be agreeable to reason.

How absurd is it to suppose, that we must lay aside our reason in matters of religion! What has a man to guide him, if he lay aside the use of his reason? You will say, the scriptures are the rule of our faith and practice: but, can a man apply the rule without using his reason? What has he to show him that he applies it right rather than wrong? A man that gives up his reason in matters of religion or of experience—in matters that concern the internal state of his own mind, abandons himself to imagination, and is liable to be carried away by his passions, he knows not whither; like a ship at sea, without a rudder and without a compass, he has nothing to direct him how to steer his course, and he cannot tell whither he is going. How justly then did Mr. Wesley adopt this principle, that we ought to use our reason to guard our minds from error, and to enable us to form a true judgment both from scripture and experience!

Speaking to one who required a religion agreeable to reason, he says, "We join with you, in desiring a religion founded on reason, and every way agreeable thereto. But one question remains to be asked, What do you mean by reason? I suppose you mean the eternal reason, or the nature of things: the nature of God, and the nature of man, with the relations necessarily subsisting between them. This is the very religion we preach: a religion evidently founded on, and every way agreeable to, eternal reason, to the essential nature of things. Its foundation stands on the nature of God, and the nature of man, with their mutual relations."

We have here his general view of religion; and he publicly avows that the Gospel which he preached is agreeable to this view; that is, agreeable to the nature of God and the nature of man, with their mutual relations. He was indeed at the utmost distance from the supposition, that the Gospel, as a system, is inconsistent with reason. And he explained and illustrated, on some occasions, the general doctrines which he taught, in such a way as to show that they are conformable to the general principle which he has here laid down. The outcry then which has been raised against him, and the whole body with whom he was connected, as enthusiasts and fanatics, is wholly unfounded; it proceeds from the workings of a prejudiced mind, and a want of attention to the things spoken.

The Gospel, considered as a general plan of salvation, he viewed as a display of the divine perfections, in a way agreeable to the nature of God; in which all the divine attributes harmonize, and shine forth with peculiar lustre. Divine love in the gift of a Redeemer; divine wisdom conspicuous in the plan of redemption; divine justice

tempered with mercy to man, in the death of the Saviour; and divine energy and power in making the whole effectual to raise a fallen creature from a state of sin and misery, to a state of holiness and happiness, and from a state of death, to immortal life and glory. All these are conspicuous in the gospel, as a general plan of salvation; and shine forth in the face of Jesus Christ, with peculiar glory. Thus far then, the gospel, in his view of it, is worthy of God, and coincides with our notions of the harmony and unity of the divine attributes.

The gospel, considered as a means to attain an end, discovers as great fitness in the means to the end, as can possibly be discovered in the structure of natural bodies, or in the various operations of nature, from a view of which we draw our arguments for the existence of God. How often have you heard this excellent man enlarge on these things! How often has he shown you that the gospel affords as clear a display of the moral perfections of God, as the works of nature do of his existence! This, certainly, was not an irrational view of the gospel; but showed a mind, enlarged, capacious, capable of comprehending great things, of investigating every part of the gospel, and of harmonizing the whole.

Considering the gospel as holding forth benefits to man, those benefits are suited to the nature and state of man. How often have you heard him explain this! Man is blind, ignorant, wandering out of the way; his mind being estranged from God, he lives without God in the world. But the gospel, as a system of moral truths, is adapted to enlighten the understanding and to direct the judgment. Experience and observation may convince us, as well as scripture, that a man may contemplate moral truths, and learn to discourse well of them, without acquiring a practical moral principle of sufficient strength to reform his conduct. It is conscience that judges of the right or wrong of a man's motives and actions. And till conscience interpose its authority, and pass sentence on him, the man remains insensible of his own state and condition, however well he may discourse on morality in general. He is, in the language of scripture, dead in trespasses and sins. The gospel, then, being the power of God to salvation, must be more than a mere system of morals. It promises, and God actually gives the spirit of promise, which convinces the world of sin. The Spirit of God accompanies the word of the gospel, and the other means of grace, and makes them effectual to awaken conscience to the exercise of its offices, to pass the sentence of condemnation for what has been done wrong; and the speculative truths of the understanding being thus combined with the dictates of conscience, a practical principle is formed of sufficient strength to restrain the passions and reform the conduct. This our Reverend Father used to call repentance, and often conviction for sin. And was he irrational in this? Is not this blessing of the gospel agreeable to the state, and to the natural faculties of man?

He considered the gospel as a dispensation of mercy to men, holding forth pardon, a free pardon of sin to all who repent and believe in Christ Jesus. That this is a scriptural doctrine, no man can doubt who reads the New Testament: it is interwoven with every part of scripture. It will bear the test of reason also. It is suited to the state and wants of men, as they stand related to a holy God. It is suited to the wants of every man living: every man has sinned, and comes short of the glory of God; every man, therefore, stands in need of mercy. It was not then irrational in our minister, to hold forth the rich display of divine grace in Christ Jesus to penitent sinners, in the most free manner. His doctrine is founded on a general view of the scriptures; on the peculiar promises of the gospel; and it is suited to the present condition and wants of men, as they stand related to God and to the prospects of another world.

The gospel enjoins universal holiness, both in heart and the conduct of life. The design of it is, to regulate our affections and govern our actions. It requires us to be dead to the world and alive to God: to love the Lord our God with all our heart,

and our neighbour as ourselves: to do unto others as we would wish they should do unto us. And God has promised in the gospel, the continual aid and assistance of his Holy Spirit, to strengthen us with all might in the inner man: Christ is a Saviour that is able to save to the uttermost, all them that come unto God by him; and there is a throne of grace, at which we may obtain, not only mercy, but grace to help in time of need. To him who rightly believes the gospel, it is a means adequate to the end intended by it: to him it is a quickening spirit, a purifying and cleansing word, the power of God to his salvation; it influences every faculty of his mind, and regulates every action of his life: to his mind it exhibits such views of paternal love in every part of the plan of redemption, and of a superintending Providence, directing all things with unerring wisdom, to promote his holiness here, and his happiness and glory hereafter, that he is continually animated to the practice of every christian virtue, and strengthened with patience to run the race that is set before him.

The gospel then, considered as a large comprehensive plan of redemption, holds forth blessings suited to our present state of necessities: wisdom to instruct us, grace to justify or pardon, and to sanctify and cleanse us from evil; with promises of protection and help through the snares and difficulties of life. It operates in a way that is suited to our faculties: it enlightens the understanding, awakens the conscience, governs the will, and regulates the affections. Nor are its benefits confined to the present life; they extend to the regions of the dead, and expand our views to the prospects of eternity. What a glorious view does the gospel give us of a resurrection from the dead! Our Lord hath died and risen again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. They that die in the Lord are still under his protection and guidance. Death cannot separate any from the love of Christ. The gospel, therefore, presents blessings suited to our necessities, comprehensive as our wants, and adapted to our state in life and death, and the enjoyments of a glorious and happy eternity.

But in explaining the order in which the blessings of the gospel are promised to man, he showed a mind well instructed in the oracles of God, and well acquainted with human nature. There is not perhaps greater confusion in any part of the system of religion, or in the common explanations given of the gospel, than in this; the order in which the blessings of the gospel are promised to us, and in which we ought to expect them. Our Father, who is gone to his reward, had an excellent introduction to this part of his ministerial office: he himself had entered in at the right door. When a minister is awakened in his own heart, when he is truly sensible of his sin and of the want of a Saviour; and comes to God for mercy as a poor sinner, and accepts it as the free gift of God through Jesus Christ; being sensible that he must be justified by faith, without the deeds of the law; he is well prepared to instruct others; and to instruct them, not in the right way only, but also in the right order in which we ought to expect the benefits of the gospel. How accurate was Mr. Wesley in showing that the first step, to be a Christian, is to repent; that till the conscience be awakened to a sense of the evil of sin, a man cannot enter into a state of justification: it would totally subvert the design of the gospel, were it possible that an unawakened person could be justified. The very supposition frustrates every intention of the coming of the Son of God; which was to deliver us from sin, to reconcile us to God, and to prepare us for heaven. He has carefully and properly distinguished these matters in his preaching and writings: how often has he told you that the awakening of conscience is the first step in supernatural religion: and that till a man is convinced of the evil of sin and is determined to depart from it; till he is convinced that there is a beauty in holiness, and something truly desirable in being reconciled to God; he is not prepared to receive Christ. It would be well if all the ministers of the gospel laid this true foundation of christian experience; and did not confound the order in which the blessings of the gospel are given to the soul. It has been a singular blessing to you, and to the

Methodists at large, that your ministers have so accurately distinguished these things, and guarded you against error in a matter that so nearly concerns your peace and your progress in the divine life. You have by these distinctions been enabled to judge with more certainty of your state of mind, and to what degree of experience you have already attained in the things of God: you have been enabled to see more distinctly and clearly the benefits of the gospel which are still before you, and have been animated in the pursuit of them, by an assurance of success, if you persevere in the way which God has appointed.

In marking so distinctly the order in which we experience the benefits of the gospel, Mr. Wesley has followed the example of our Lord and his apostles. Our Lord began his preaching, by saying, *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* Peter, preaching to the Jews at Jerusalem, says, *Repent ye, and be converted.* Paul has made this distinction in the most pointed manner: "I kept back nothing," says he, "that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you, publicly and from house to house: testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, *repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*" He has not followed the scripture only in observing this order, but also reason and the natural order of things. Does not the natural order of things require, that a man be first convinced of his faults, before he can be reclaimed from them? Must not a man be conscious of his condemnation before he will apply to God for pardon? Our progress in Christian experience bears a striking analogy to our progress in any art or science. A man must first be instructed in the fundamental principles of an art or science, before he can proceed to the higher branches of it. The first step prepares him for the second, and so on through the whole of his progress. The same order is observable in Christian experience. The first step in it prepares the mind for the second; and so on till we come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

The second important and necessary step in Christian experience is, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, arising from a scriptural view of his priestly office. When the mind is duly prepared to receive Christ in this character, pardon is held forth in the gospel as a free gift, without money and without price; Christ is here proposed to us as the atonement for our sins. How often has he set him forth as crucified before your eyes! He has exhibited him to your view in his priestly character as the atonement for the sins of the world. He has often shown you that the atonement which he has made is complete: that the most vile, helpless sinner who repents and turns from his sins, may come and freely receive pardon as the gift of God in and through Christ, and have free admittance to this throne of grace. How gloriously has he often explained this truth, and with what good effect to many of you! You have been blessed and strengthened under his word, God has borne witness to the truth of it, and sealed its evidence upon your hearts.

In explaining sanctification, he has accurately distinguished it from justification, or the pardon of sin. Justification admits us into a state of grace and favour with God, into the family of heaven; into a state of fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and lays the foundation of sanctification or Christian holiness in all its extent. He has shown you that the tendency and end of your justification, is holiness of heart and holiness in all manner of conversation; that being justified by faith, your relation to God is altered; your sins are forgiven; you are now become children of God and heirs of all the promises of the gospel, and are quickened and animated with the spirit of it. In this stage of Christian experience, faith realizes the truths of the gospel to the mind; it becomes a practical principle of sufficient strength not only to restrain the passions, but to purify the heart, to influence every faculty of the soul, and every action in life, and to transform the man as a moral agent into the image of God. What a glorious view of the gospel has he afforded you; and how often has he instructed you that Christ, as the living head of his church, and acting upon it, in and

by the means of every part of the gospel, is sufficient to accomplish the end of his coming; to change the heart, write his laws upon our mind, and make us like himself! He has urged these views of the gospel upon you again and again, and roused you to an ardent pursuit of universal holiness and purity. But a great clamour has been raised against him on this subject, because he called his view of sanctification by the word perfection; many even of the professors of religion have thought him very absurd in this matter: he has often explained to you what he meant by that term; and that he did not mean to differ with any one about a word, though it be scriptural; that he meant by the word perfection such a degree of the love of God and the love of man; such a degree of the love of justice, truth, holiness, and purity, as will remove from the heart every contrary disposition towards God or man: and that this should be our state of mind in every situation, and in every circumstance of life. Oh! what a paradise would this earth be, were all Christians sanctified in this degree! Can there be a more amiable picture of the gospel than this? Is it irrational to tell us that God sent his Son into the world to make us new creatures; to give us true views of God and of ourselves; of his love, mercy, truth, and goodness; of his providential care, and his all-sufficiency to bless us with every blessing in heavenly things in Christ Jesus; to give us true views of life, death, and eternity, and hereby to arm us with divine strength to resist and overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil; and to give us those dispositions of mind which prepare us to worship, love, reverence, and serve God, and to be just, true, and helpful to one another in this wilderness, as a preparation for the enjoyment of God, and the society of heaven? And is this to talk irrationally? as an enthusiast? as one who is doing an injury to the world? How rashly do men judge and speak when their passions are inflamed! but candour must acknowledge that in this he excelled, and that though his doctrine is contrary to the lives of the professors of religion in general, it is agreeable to the oracles of God.

There is another point relative to his religious opinions, that has been strangely misunderstood, and a great outcry raised against it—not, indeed, by the bulk of religious people, but by men of abilities, and of learning, who make pretensions to reason and calm discussion—that all the blessings of the gospel are to be obtained by faith. He has told us expressly, that we are saved by faith: he has told us also, what he means by salvation; the being put in possession of the blessings of the gospel; the being justified by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Christ; the being sanctified or made holy in heart, and holy in all manner of conversation; he has taught you that all these things are to be obtained by faith: and you can hardly open your Testament in any part but you will find this doctrine taught: you can hardly read a chapter in St. Paul's Epistles but you find it inculcated again and again. It will bear the test of reason also, and will be found, upon the strictest inquiry, to be agreeable to our state and condition in this life. Is it unreasonable, that we should believe in God? that we should believe in him who made us, who upholds us, and who governs all things; in him who conducts the whole machine of nature, in all its vast extent, and in all its complicated operations; who comprehends every thing, as it were, in one grasp; in whom all things live, and move, and have their being? Is it unreasonable that a poor mortal that knows not what is just coming upon him, not even what shall happen to him the next moment, should trust in God? That he should confide in the goodness and providence of him, who sees all things at one view, past, present, and to come; and who sees man at one glance, in every period of his existence, with every surrounding circumstance? Is not this agreeable to the nature of God and the state of man?

The gospel promiseth to us a state of intercourse and fellowship with God, in the present enjoyment of spiritual blessings in Jesus Christ. Faith is made a necessary condition of entering into this state of intercourse and enjoyment. In this, God has dealt with us in a way suitable to our faculties, and our state of intercourse with one

another. For you have no kind of connection with each other, without faith; all must acknowledge that faith is the bond of human society. Can you transact any kind of business without it? You can have no enjoyment of the things of this life without an act of faith preceding it. All your expectations and future prospects in life are founded on faith. You will find, upon examination, that in every branch of business, in every social intercourse, you must first believe, and then you will obtain the thing you expected, provided your faith be rightly placed. You cannot engage a servant, without faith in him. A merchant cannot transact business with any one, without first having faith in the person with whom he transacts that business. When the husbandman ploughs his land and sows his seed, faith is the principle from which he acts. Unless, then, we act from faith, we can have no fellowship with one another, nor enjoy the comforts of life. And, if the mind be sufficiently furnished with knowledge and prudence, our success will be in proportion to the degree of faith, and the exertions that are made in consequence of it. This great man, then, has shown himself well acquainted both with scripture and human nature, in explaining this important article of Christian experience.

How does faith operate on the mind in Christian experience? In repentance, the first step towards the Christian life is, a man must believe that there is a God; who is holy, just, and good: he must believe the word of God; that there is a judgment to come, when every thought and action will be examined, and when the wicked will be condemned to punishment, and the righteous will inherit eternal life. He must believe also that God is merciful, that pardon may be obtained through Jesus Christ: for a view of the holiness of God and of his own sinfulness, would, without this, produce despair, which is not gospel repentance. When, by the grace of God, these things are impressed upon the mind of a man, with full conviction of their truth, they awaken the conscience, and excite him to attention and self-examination, and gradually prepare him to receive Christ in his mediatorial character. With respect to pardon, when the mind is rightly prepared for it, the gospel has made faith the express condition of it. How ably has our aged minister established this truth, and defended it against all opposition. Pardon of sins is obtained for us by the blood of Christ, it is promised to us by the word of God; but must be received by faith; we must believe in the word of promise, in order to receive it. And he that believeth is justified: he is justified now, the moment he receives Christ as his mediator, as his saviour, as his atonement. His faith is counted to him for righteousness, it gives him a title to the promise of pardon, and to the blessings connected with it.

If we examine how faith purifies the heart, we shall find nothing irrational in the doctrine. There is nothing better adapted to remove every evil from the human heart than faith in Christ; there is nothing more efficacious, to preserve us from evil through life, than faith rightly explained and rightly exercised; faith, as it unites us to Christ our living head, gives us a principle of divine life; we begin to live unto God, from a principle of love in the heart; to live a life that is given by him who is the resurrection and the life, and who raiseth the soul to an union with God. When this has taken place, old things are done away, all things are become new; the views, the purposes and the affections of the man are changed: he no longer acts from the same motives, nor by the same rule as before: a new principle of action is formed in the heart, which directly leads to holiness and to God.

Faith, as a practical principle, is called by Paul, *the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.* It gives the things hoped for a present subsistence in the mind, in that degree which is suited to our present state. It is the evidence of things not seen; it realizes the truths of the gospel to the mind, and enables it to view them with as much certainty as we have of the existence of corporeal objects, when we feel their influence on our senses. A man who acts under the influence of this faith, who has gospel truths full in his view, with all the certainty that his senses

can give him of the existence of external objects, will undoubtedly find his heart powerfully affected by them. This faith will work by love, it will purify the heart from every thing contrary to the mind that was in Christ. It will enable him to acknowledge God in all his ways, to set him continually before his eyes, to live as in his presence, with a view to his glory, and resigned to his will. Let us instance in one thing only at present. Suppose a man believes that there is a Providence which superintends human affairs: if he be assured that Divine Love can intend nothing but good in every thing that happens to him, and that Infinite Wisdom cannot err in adapting the means to the end intended: if he be as fully assured of these truths as he is of the existence of the things which he sees or hears; will not this faith lead him to a reverential fear of God, and to a perfect resignation to his will in every occurrence of life? It will make him cautious in his conduct, and attentive to every part of his duty. He will be anxiously careful for nothing, but, living under a deep sense of the Divine presence and care, his mind will be kept in perfect peace, because it is stayed upon God. In this, then, our Father in Christ spoke agreeably to Scripture and to reason.

Let us now notice his notions of the universality of the gospel blessings. Here he shone with peculiar lustre; here he did honour to God and to the Divine attributes; he maintained that God is a God of love—not to a part of his creatures only, but to all; that he who is the Father of all, who made all, who stands in the same relation to all his creatures, loves them all; that he loved the world, and gave his Son a ransom for all without distinction of persons; that there is no respect of persons with God. This is an amiable character of the Deity. It always appeared to him, that to represent God as partial, as confining his love to a few, was unworthy our notions of the Deity. He, therefore, explained the gospel in the most glorious and extensive point of view. He maintained that Christ died for all men, that he is to be offered to all; all are to be invited to come to him; and whosoever comes in the way which God has appointed, may partake of his blessings. He maintained that sufficient grace is given to all, in that way and manner which is best adapted to influence the mind. And may we not appeal to every man's experience for the truth of this? How often has he appealed to the consciences of men! Have not your hearts reproved you? Have you not at times trembled for your sins? Have you not been ashamed of yourselves—have you not detested your own conduct in secret, when none has seen you but God, and none has been privy to your actions but your own heart? Whence does this arise? Certainly not from man, but from God. It is an evidence that there is salvation for thee, O man, who art in this state; God is not willing that thou shouldst perish: he is calling thee, inviting thee to turn from thy sins, and to turn to God. He has thus stated the truths of the gospel with convincing evidence. The expressions of Scripture are positive in favour of this doctrine; there are passages which so positively declare it, that it is impossible to give any other construction to them without the greatest violence; but there is not a single passage in the New Testament, which seems to favour the doctrine that Christ died for a part of mankind only, which will not easily admit of a different construction.

He raised some enemies by this doctrine. He has been called an Arminian; and perhaps many who have used the term, have annexed an idea to it by no means just. How often has he wished—and it is devoutly to be wished by all the friends of true religion—that the names of Calvinist and Arminian were buried in oblivion; they have tended to keep up strife and discord only, amongst those who ought to love one another as brethren, however they have differed on some points of doctrine. But some have supposed that to be an Arminian, is to maintain salvation by works; that it is to degrade Christ, and to throw the lustre of redemption by Christ into a cloud at any rate, if not to overturn it. Was this the case with our minister of the gospel? Did he not preach free grace as much as any Calvinist? Did he not assert that

pardon is the free gift of God, without money and without price? Did he not assert that repentance itself only prepares the heart to receive the gift of God—that it does not give any kind of merit to the man? How often has he declared to you that the best works any man can perform need atonement! So far was he from putting works in the place of the blood of Christ, that he gave them their just value only; he placed them in the order of Christian experience where the gospel places them; as the fruits of a living, operative faith, and as the measure of our future reward; for every man will be rewarded, not for his works, but according to the measure of them. This is undoubtedly a scriptural representation of this matter, and it would be well if all Christians were to attend to this distinction more than they do. It is to be feared that some may have cried out against works, not from the very best motives; at least from some inclination to relax in holiness. The way in which some have preached faith, has done no honour to the gospel; and may, probably, have encouraged some persons to pay less attention to Christian duties than they ought to do. But while he insisted on good works, as the necessary fruits of faith, he gave the whole glory of salvation to God, from first to last; not in the general plan of it only, but in the order of communicating the benefits of Christ to the mind. He believed that man would never turn to God, if God did not begin the work: nay, how often has he told you, that the first approaches of grace to the mind are irresistible; that a man cannot avoid being convinced that he is a sinner; that God by various means awakens his conscience; and whether the man will or no, these convictions approach him. He gave all the glory of the work of salvation in the heart to the grace of God; he ascribes no merit to works; he tells you, indeed, that in proportion as you improve the grace given, you shall have more, and be rewarded according to your works, with grace here as well as glory hereafter.

There is one subject more which I must touch upon, Christian experience. It is well known that this able minister of the gospel, together with his brother Charles, and the Rev. Mr. Whitefield, have been the principal instruments in the hands of God, of diffusing the knowledge of this important article of the Christian religion, amongst the bulk of the people of this country. And in this respect only, they have been a blessing to every class and order of men. For though all have not believed their report, yet, many have believed it in every station of life, and borne a happy testimony to the truth of it. How ably has our beloved Father illustrated and defended this part of Christianity! Many, indeed, have supposed that what we call experience is mere imagination: that it is nothing more than the working up of our own minds into a fancy of something which can have no foundation in truth or reason. But Christian experience is something real and not imaginary; it rests upon as solid a foundation as the evidence of our external senses. We have no more reason to doubt the reality of our experience, when it is scriptural, than we have to doubt of the existence of an object which we see with our eyes, or of a sound which we hear, when these organs are in the most sound and healthy state. But what is Christian experience, and what degree of certainty is there in it?

Christian experience is the present possession of the benefits of the gospel which relate to this life, and which prepare us for the enjoyment of God in glory. If we use the word in the most extensive sense, so as to include the preparation of the mind to receive Christ in his mediatorial character, it will imply repentance towards God, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the fruits of the Spirit, so admirably described by Paul; love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness and temperance, with all the privileges of the Christian state here. In the gospel we are commanded to repent and return to God; to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to be filled with the fruits of the Spirit. The gospel promises every necessary aid and assistance to put us in possession of these benefits; and we read also in the New Testament of many persons who professed to have experience of these things. If, indeed, the gospel

be a fable, then the things of which it speaks, and the promises which it makes, signify nothing real, they are purely imaginary, and to profess any experience of them must be delusion. But, as we have the most certain evidence that the gospel is of God: that it gives a true account of what God has done and is now doing for the salvation of men, and of the means by which he is accomplishing this great purpose, the promises it gives us must signify something real, and they must be as certain as the existence and truth of God himself. It is evident then, that we may experience the blessings which it promises to us, if we seek them in the way which God hath appointed.

If we inquire into the evidence which a man has that he does experience the things which we here speak of, we shall find that it is of the strongest kind possible. If a man's understanding be enlightened with gospel truths; if his conscience be awakened to decide justly on his motives and actions, as they are related to God and his law; if in consequence of this, he turns from his sins, and is humbled, abased, and ashamed before God for them, and prays for mercy; how is it possible for such a change as this to take place in the dictates of his conscience and in the opinion he has had of himself, and he not know it? The very supposition is absurd; he must be as conscious of it as he is of his own existence, or of any thing that happens to him. In like manner, when a person, in the state I have now described, is enabled to believe in Jesus Christ to the saving of his soul; to rely fully upon him for pardon and acceptance with God; must not such a person be conscious of this act of his mind, and of the change in his views of God, and in the feelings of his mind that are subsequent to it? Will he not be as conscious and certain of these things as he is when he sees an object before him, or feels pleasure or pain? If he that believeth be filled with love, joy, peace, and the other fruits of the Spirit just mentioned, must he not be certain of this? Our internal consciousness carries the same conviction of reality with it, as our external senses. Would it not appear exceedingly absurd to you, if you heard a person say in the common affairs of life, that he loved an object dearly, but that he was not conscious of any love; that he rejoiced exceedingly in a thing, but that he did not feel any joy? It is just the same in Christian experience. If from proper views of the gospel and faith in Christ, I feel peace, I cannot be ignorant of it; if I look up to God through Jesus Christ with holy confidence, and feel pleasure and delight, I must be conscious and certain of it.

Christian experience, then, has certainty in it; if a man has it, he cannot be ignorant of it. How is it possible for any man who has not felt the peace of God to form a just notion of it? Its evidence stands on the same ground as the evidence of our external senses. For if a man had never seen colours, he could not form any true idea of them; if a man had never felt pain or pleasure, he could not be taught to under, stand what they are; however perfect his rational faculties might be, he must feel them to know them. So it is with Christian experience, you must enter into it and feel it, and then you will know what it is; and will as easily distinguish it from the feelings or consciousness arising from other things, as you distinguish seeing from hearing, or the touch from the smell.

III. Having considered the character of the Rev. Mr. Wesley as a man of learning, and well qualified to examine a subject and to discover the truth; and having taken a view of his principal and leading opinions in religion; my intention is, very briefly to consider his labours as a minister of the Gospel, and the effects of them.

Mr. Wesley was a man of industry from his youth, and employed his time to the greatest advantage in pursuit of literary knowledge. After he was convinced of the pure doctrines of the gospel, he was assiduous in declaring them to others. How few possess the necessary qualifications for useful studies and for active life! These were united in him in a very high degree. His leading doctrines discover a diligent and patient examination of the Scriptures, great strength of judgment, and closeness

of reasoning: and he was not less remarkable for his zeal, activity, and steadiness in propagating them among the people, for which many thousands have had reason to thank God in their dying moments. At first he preached in the churches wherever an opportunity offered; but his doctrines giving offence to some, and the crowds that attended him raising envy in others, the churches were by degrees shut against him. If we consider his firm attachment to the Church of England, and his fondness for regularity and order in church government, it will appear surprising that this circumstance did not damp his zeal, and shake the firmness of his mind. It is happy that it did not. Being convinced of the importance of the doctrines of the gospel to the people at large, and that it was his duty to preach the glad tidings of peace and salvation to all; knowing also that God loves mercy rather than sacrifice, he thought it would be criminal in him to sacrifice his views of the gospel, and his opportunities of doing good, to the prejudices of others. He therefore went out into the highways and hedges, to invite sinners to repentance, and to make them partakers of gospel blessings. He must have foreseen, that in taking this step, mankind would put different constructions on his conduct; and that to attempt a thing so new in the world, would raise many enemies against him, and expose him to many difficulties. Whatever prospect his former situation had offered him, of ease, honour or wealth, these he left behind him; and nothing could at this time present itself to his view, but labour and weariness, accompanied with reproach, persecution and contempt from men. Is it possible to suppose for a moment, that a man of calm reflection, as Mr. Wesley was, who never took any step of importance without mature deliberation, would have acted as he did at this time, without a full conviction that he was doing his duty—that the doctrines which he taught were the truths of the gospel, and of the utmost importance to the happiness of men? He must have had more than a bare conviction of these truths; he must have been animated with an ardent desire to glorify God in the propagation of his truth, and to be instrumental of good to his fellow-creatures.

The regularity and steadiness with which Mr. Wesley pursued his labours, and the extent to which he carried them, are almost beyond conception, and sufficient to awaken astonishment in the mind of any man who reflects upon them. When he first went out to preach in the different parts of the kingdom, and to carry the light of the gospel to those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, he was surrounded with difficulties on every side. In many places he had scarcely food to eat, or a place in which to lie down. In some places, he was considered as an enemy to his country; in others, that he had private and interested views in what he did; for few could at first imagine that any man would undergo the labour and fatigue which he underwent, purely for the good of others. But none of these things ever moved him; he still continued to travel from place to place to do good to those who reviled and persecuted him. He laboured day and night for the good of the people. This he did through persecution, reproach, and every difficulty that lay in his way: nothing turned him aside from the grand object of his preaching the gospel to the poor. Here we cannot but admire the strength and firmness of his resolution, and his love of God and man, which enabled him to persevere in this arduous and difficult undertaking. Oh, what a glorious influence would the gospel soon acquire over the minds of men, if those who are true ministers of it, had the bold, the firm, the intrepid spirit which Mr. Wesley has shown: did they, like him, give up their ease, their pleasure, and everything which is counted dear in this world, to do good unto men, to glorify God, and to bring men to the obedience of Christ! There are many ministers of the gospel who wish well to experimental religion, and many who truly preach it, but their preaching is limited to a few persons, comparatively speaking; his mind expanded to larger views of public good: his arms would have embraced, if possible, all mankind, and as far as his strength would carry him, he spread the knowledge of gospel truth into every part of these kingdoms.

But Mr. Wesley was not proof against labour, persecution and reproach only; but against the softer and finer feelings of human nature also, when they stood in the way of the great work in which he was engaged: those feelings which are apt to effeminate the mind, or to warp a man from a uniform and steady attention to his duty. He had a peculiar pleasure in reading and study; and every literary man knows the force of this passion, and how apt it is to make him encroach on the time which ought to be employed in other duties. But Mr. Wesley had the resolution to lay aside any subject whenever the hour came that he was to set out on his journey, or was to preach, or visit the sick. He had a high relish for rational and polite conversation; but whatever company might happen to come where he was, to converse with him during supper, he would constantly retire to rest at his usual hour, that he might rise at four o'clock in the morning, which was his constant practice, winter and summer, for more than sixty years together. He was far from being insensible to the feelings of friendship; but whenever any friendship he had formed, interfered with the good of the work he was called to, he could immediately break it off. The work to which God had called him occupied all his time and attention: he considered it as the business of his life, and sacrificed every pleasure and gratification to it. How much do all of you owe him, who has sacrificed everything dear to flesh and blood for so many years together to benefit you. It appears astonishing, to see a man pursuing the public good with so much ardour and steadiness for so long a time, denying himself every gratification and pleasure, except that of doing good. This was his general character for the number of years during which he was engaged in this work.

The industry of Mr. Wesley was almost incredible. From four o'clock in the morning till eight at night, his time was employed in reading, writing, preaching, meeting the people, visiting the sick or travelling. Before the infirmities of age came upon him, he usually travelled on horseback, and would sometimes ride thirty, forty, or fifty miles in a day, and preach two, three, or sometimes four times. He had a constant correspondence with some persons in the different societies all over the three kingdoms, and with the preachers in every part, and would answer his letters with great punctuality. He knew the state of the societies in general, and of many individuals in each of them. He read most publications that were deemed valuable, if they related to religion or natural philosophy, and often made extracts from them. If we consider the whole of his labours, and compare them with what most men of industry have done, we may say that he has lived two or three lives.

The effects of Mr. Wesley's labours have been much more extensive than any person would at first imagine. He was at the head of the little company first formed at Oxford. And if we consider the state of these kingdoms when the two Mr. Wesleys and Mr. Whitefield first went out to preach publicly, we must acknowledge that experimental religion was almost lost, at least among the common people. Without being censorious, religion was little more than loose opinions, and modes and forms of worship among the people in general. The preaching of these three men of God has had a very extensive influence on all denominations of religious people; it has been the means of awakening their attention to the grand and leading principles of the gospel: and of making them consider the experimental part of it. Their labours also have had a happy influence on the ministers of the gospel of every denomination, although some may have been ashamed to own it. With respect to the whole body of the people commonly called Methodists, they have been the means of raising them up. What were you, before you heard these three servants of God, and those associated with them, declare the glad tidings of peace and salvation? but you that were not a people, are now become the people of God, by their instrumentality. And what shall I say to you, my brethren, who have been more immediately connected with him who is now no more with us? You have been knit together by him in the bonds of Christian fellowship: you have been growing up under his paternal care for many

years. He has nourished and cherished you as a tender father: he has watched over you with anxious care, as a faithful shepherd over his flock. Consider the effects of his labours on different bodies of people who have no immediate connection with us: the numerous societies spread over the three kingdoms in connection with him, and over whom he exercised the care of a father; extend your views to America, and consider the thousands and ten thousands, who have felt the influence of his labours in the course of sixty years; and it seems an extent of usefulness beyond that of which we could imagine any one man capable. But the hand of God has been in it; the providence of God has been over it: and it is evident that he was raised up of God for this great work.

The effects of Mr. Wesley's labours on civil society have been, and still will be very considerable. Not particular parts only of the kingdom have received benefit from the preaching of the Methodists, but society in general must feel some beneficial influence from it. If you consider the whole body of people, usually called Methodists, and the immense numbers who attend their places of worship, and are benefited by them. they will amount to several hundred thousands. These are dispersed through the three kingdoms, and occupy almost every situation in life: they are become more conscientious in all their ways; more sober and regular in their behaviour; more true to their word, and more attentive to every social duty than they were before. They are better husbands and wives, better masters and servants, and better neighbours and friends, than before they heard the preaching of the Methodists. Society in general, therefore, has received benefit from them.

There is another view in which we may consider his usefulness; a view which I should not have noticed but for the sake of a pamphlet just now published; in which it is observed that the Methodists are become so large a body of people, that they ought to attract the notice of government. The Rev. Mr. Wesley was a warm and steady friend to the government; you know that he enforced these principles, as far as he could, on the minds of all that heard him. The Methodists, then, are not only made better citizens, but also better subjects. It is a rule in the society, that all the members of it shall submit themselves to the laws. If it be known that any one acts contrary to this rule, he is put away from the society. Now, if you consider a large body of people, increasing on every side, spreading themselves through the whole kingdom, who are friends to the government, friends in every point of view, and from principle; you will acknowledge, that whatever influence these people may have upon government, it must be friendly, and have a tendency to peace and good order. And if all the people were Methodists, no times of difficulty could come; but if such times should arrive, the more numerous this body of people is, the better it will be for the country.

Thus our dear and aged Father in Christ spent nearly sixty years in the labour and work of the Lord, going about from place to place, convincing gainsayers, comforting mourners, building up and strengthening those that believed: and the Church of God increased daily under his paternal care. Thus he spent his life: and his labours lasted very near to the close of it. Oh, how happy a life to be spent in doing good; to have no attachment but to God and his work; to forsake all for it! And his conduct in private life was conformable to his public character. How many persons have been ready to say, that Mr. Wesley had private ends in view; that he was accumulating money and would die rich. All that knew him, knew how false these assertions were; but all did not know him; thousands however did, who have been witnesses of his integrity and disinterestedness: and thousands of poor have experienced his benevolence. He constantly made a rule of giving all that he had to the poor; this was a favourite practice with him. He attended to the words of Christ: *For as much as ye have done it unto these, ye have done it unto me.* He considered the poor as left upon earth, that the followers of Christ might show their benevolence

to them, as they would to the person of Christ himself, were he upon earth. How many have said, How gladly would I have entertained Christ, had I lived in that country where he appeared, and at the time of his appearance! But he has left the poor behind him, that you may exercise your benevolence towards them, as you would have done to him. Mr. Wesley took a pleasure and delight in doing this, and sometimes left himself so destitute, that he had hardly sufficient to defray his travelling expenses.

I was asked the other day, whether Mr. Wesley had not many meeting-houses and chapels that were his property, and whether he did not die rich? I answered, Sir, Mr. Wesley had not one house of his own in the three kingdoms, neither a private house nor a preaching-house; therefore he did not die rich. What money he had, which was the produce of his books, and what charitable persons gave him to distribute to the poor, he constantly gave away: and he observes, it only went through his hands, but none of it remained with him.

We must naturally suppose that a person so devoted to the work and service of God, and for so long a time, must be an object of divine approbation; and God showed marks of it to him even in his last moments; which was a great comfort both to him and to his numerous friends.

IV. I was called to Mr. Wesley on Friday the 25th of February. When I entered the room he cheerfully said, "Doctor, they are more afraid than hurt." I found great oppression on the brain, a universal tremor, great debility of the whole nervous system, and a fever, which I considered as symptomatic, depending wholly on the state of debility. I wrote for him, but he neither took medicine nor nourishment in a quantity sufficient to be of any use. Friday night and Saturday forenoon, the lethargic symptoms increased. It now appeared to me that the powers of nature were exhausted and I was so certain of his approaching dissolution, that I desired Mr. Bradford to ask him if he had any affairs which he wished to settle; or if there were any person either in London or in the country, whom he desired to see. To these questions he gave no answer. We were all extremely anxious that the lethargy might be removed before his departure hence; and on Saturday evening the means made use of were successful: the lethargic symptoms abated, and on Sunday morning he seemed quite in possession of his faculties, and to feel his situation. His debility, however, increased, and the fever continued, with alternate changes of flushings and paleness. On Monday the 28th, I desired he might be asked if he would have any other physician called in to attend him; but this he absolutely refused. On Tuesday it appeared to me that death was approaching, and in the evening it was very evident. I was with him till past twelve o'clock that night. I asked him before I left the room, if he knew me: he answered Yes, and pressed my hand with all the little strength he had. From this time he gradually sunk, and about twenty minutes before ten on Wednesday morning, the 2d of March, he died, without a struggle or groan, and went to receive the glorious reward of his labours.

From these outlines of the illustrious character of Mr. Wesley, it appears that he did not follow cunningly devised fables, but the evidence of gospel truth. And the candid will perceive, that we have not adopted these opinions merely because Mr. Wesley taught them, but because they appear to us to be true. Let us then, my brethren, hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end; and prove to the world that our doctrines are true, not by reason and argument only, but by our tempers and conduct. Let us be careful to act worthy of our holy vocation, and to persevere to the end in well-doing; we shall then receive, with him who is now gone before us, the promised reward: Which may God of his infinite mercy grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AN EXTRACT FROM MR. WESLEY'S WILL.

"I GIVE all my manuscripts to Thomas Coke, Dr. Whitehead, and Henry Moore, to be burnt or published, as they see good."*

As the dispute between Dr. Coke, Mr. Moore, the Methodist Conference, and me, respecting the publication of Mr. J. Wesley's Life, has been very generally made known through the three kingdoms, it seems necessary to state to the public, what has been done on my part, and on the part of the committee united with me, to put an end to that dispute. After the Manchester Conference, in 1791, Mr. Rogers, Dr. Coke, Mr. Whitefield, &c. began the dispute, on the subject of money, or the division of the profits arising from the sale of the Life: they afterwards required, that I should publish nothing in the Life of Mr. J. Wesley, but what should be approved by a committee of the preachers. With respect to the first, I offered to give them the whole profits of the work, if they desired it, in order to put an end to the difference, as my printed letter of November of that year, will testify. With respect to the requisition, I could not in conscience submit to it. I offered to read the manuscript to them as friends, and to consult them on particular parts of Mr. Wesley's life; but insisted on the right of using my own judgment, if on any point we could not agree. Here then we differed, and in the printed letter abovementioned, I addressed the preachers on this subject, in the following words: "I therefore entreat you, for God's sake, for the sake of peace among the people, for the honor of religion in general, to desist from this arbitrary and illiberal requisition. If you still insist upon it, and make a breach on this account, I call the living God to witness between me and you this day, that I am clear; the mischief that may follow, will lie at your door, not mine; and you shall answer for it, at the awful tribunal of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

In August, 1792, when the Methodist preachers were assembled in conference, at London, the committee abovementioned, met, and resolved,

That, "When the members of the committee united themselves together, to support Dr. Whitehead in writing the life of Mr. Wesley, the following were the leading principles of their union: 1. That Dr. Whitehead having been solicited to write the life, by the executors, preachers, and others, had pledged himself to the public to execute the work; and his printed proposals had been signed by the executors, and admitted by the Conference. 2. That Dr. Whitehead had an undoubted right to use his own judgment without control, in writing a book to which his name must be prefixed, and for the contents of which he only was responsible to the Methodist connection at large, and to the public. 3. That the three persons to whom Mr. Wesley had bequeathed his manuscripts, of whom Dr. Whitehead was one, having deliberately agreed that the doctor should have the use of them to assist him in executing the work, and they having been delivered unconditionally to him for that end, he had a right to the discretional use of them, notwithstanding that two of those persons afterwards changed their mind on that subject. 4. When some of the preachers opposed Dr. Whitehead in the performance of his engagements to the public, the steps they took to injure his reputation, appeared to this committee unjustifiable, and if tolerated would take away all security for the character of every member of the Methodist society: the members of the committee, therefore, thought it their duty to oppose such proceedings, and to support an injured man who bore a public and respectable character, from the violent and unjust attacks made upon him. The committee are still persuaded of the justice and equity of these principles: but to show the disinterestedness of Dr. Whitehead and of this committee, and their desire of peace, they are willing to make some sacrifices for the sake thereof; and therefore, with the consent of Dr. Whitehead, make the following propositions:

* See Arminian Magazine for January, 1792, page 29.

First. "That all the Manuscripts of Mr. Wesley shall be fairly and impartially examined, by Dr. Coke, Mr. Moore, and Dr. Whitehead. Such papers as they shall unanimously deem unfit for publication, shall be burnt immediately: out of the remainder Dr. Whitehead shall be at liberty to select such as he thinks necessary for his work; and the residue* to be given into the hands of Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore.

Second. "That the Life of Mr. Wesley, written by Dr. Whitehead, shall be given up by the committee to the Conference, aud become their entire property.

Third. "That one hundred and twenty-eight pages of the Life being already printed off, Dr. Whitehead will read them to a committee of the preachers, if desired, that they may judge of the spirit and manner, in which the Life will be written, before they come to any conclusion.

Fourth. "That Dr. Whitehead will read his manuscript as the work goes on, to any person or persons the conference shall appoint; he will be glad of their opinion and advice, which he will follow in all cases, as far as he shall judge it consistent with the usefulness and reputation of his work.

Fifth. "That the Conference shall defray all the expenses which the committee has been at up to the present time (the account to be made up by the treasurers of the committee) and take the expense of the work upon themselves: any consideration to be given Dr. Whitehead for his trouble, &c., in writing the Life, shall be wholly left to the determination of Conference in 1794, and if he never receives one shilling, he will not complain.

Sixth. "The Life of Mr. Wesley, written by Dr. Whitehead, shall never be printed, in any form, without Dr. Whitehead's name, nor altered in any part of it without his consent.

Seventh. "Dr. Whitehead shall immediately take his place, as a preacher in the new chapel, if the trustees approve thereof, as he did before this dispute happened; and let all past differences be buried and forgotten.

Eighth. "The fifty copies of the Life which are printed on large fine paper, shall be finished in the same manner as the eight sheets of them which are already printed off; and these fifty copies shall then be hot-pressed, and be delivered to Dr. Whitehead in boards at the common selling price of the book, to be distributed by him according to his original intention in printing them.

"In case these propositions are rejected, the committee will consider Dr. Whitehead and themselves, and the whole of this dispute, to be remaining in the same state as previous to the making these proposals.

"The committee consider as first principles, from which they can never recede; first, that Dr. Whitehead shall write the Life, subject to proposition No. 1. Secondly, That he use his own judgment therein without control. These two principles being admitted, the committee will, if the Conference prefer it, submit every other part of the difference to the decision of two persons, one to be chosen by the Conference, and the other by the committee; which two persons, in case of a difference in opinion, shall nominate a third person to decide by a majority.—If the Conference adopt either of these proposals, the parties to enter into satisfactory engagements for the fulfilment of them.

"That a copy of the proceedings of this meeting, signed by the secretary, be sent to Mr. Alexander Mather, the president of the Conference."—It must be observed, that Dr. Coke was secretary to the Conference, and Mr. Moore a member of it, and present at it. Our proposals were rejected.

Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore have published a Life of Mr. Wesley; and they inform the public, in their Preface, that, there is nothing material respecting him, that is not given in their volume. They assign, as an evidence of this, that, all his private papers were open to their inspection, for several years. According to their own declaration, therefore, they have suffered no loss or injury, on account of the papers being in my hands.

* It was intended, and I believe sufficiently understood on both sides, that all the papers would be delivered up without reserve, as soon as the Life should be published.

PREFACE.

The publication of this first volume of Mr. Wesley's Life, having been delayed much beyond the general expectation, the members of the committee, who so generously united to encourage and assist me in carrying on the work, the subscribers to it, and the public at large, have a right to expect some explanation of the causes which have occasioned the delay. I shall mention two principal causes, though others have concurred in a less degree. The first is, the cruel and persevering opposition of *some* of the Methodist preachers, against the execution of the work. I had determined to write, not only the Life of Mr. Wesley, but a history of Methodism, with the utmost impartiality; to describe things as they have been, and as they are, without the false coloring that the spirit of a party will always give to history: but it was impossible to see with indifference the conduct of *these* preachers. Mr. Wesley never met with a more malignant opposition in the whole course of his labors, than I have experienced for attempting to describe them. Nor was I alone the object of their abuse; my friends also, shared it with me. It sometimes appeared to me, that they carried their opposition to such outrageous and indecent lengths, on purpose to excite an opposition to them, in the Life itself; that they might have a fairer pretext to advise the people not to read it. I determined to disappoint them; and to take no further notice of them, than the connection of the history required, and without any particular reference to the present dispute. Whenever, therefore, I found my mind affected by their conduct, so that I could not write with that calmness and ease that I wished, I laid the work wholly aside, which has been no small cause of the delay. This may be called a weakness: be it so; I never pretended to be free from the common feelings of human nature; or to be insensible of the improper

conduct of others, towards my friends. My business has been, to guard my mind against any improper influence it might have on my judgment, in describing facts that have taken place in the establishment of Methodism, and to distinguish between the rational and liberal principles of Mr. Wesley, on which the Methodist societies were founded, and the narrow and arbitrary conduct of a few individuals: and this, by the grace of God, I hope has been carefully done.

The second cause of delay has been the bankruptcy of the printer I first employed. This has occasioned a considerable loss, a part of the printed sheets being damaged, and a delay of several months. I am persuaded, however, that the work has received some improvements from the length of time it has been in hand. It may have defects at present, but they would have been greater and more numerous, had it been written in a hurry, immediately after the death of Mr. Wesley.

When I began to write the Life of Mr. Charles Wesley, I did not expect it would have been so long as it is. But the materials increased so fast upon me, as I proceeded, that I could easily have filled the whole volume with them. As they were new, and appeared to me important, I could not prevail on myself to abridge them, more than I have done. I thought it a pity that a man of so excellent a character should lie hid under a heap of rubbish, which envy had thrown upon him. A part of this rubbish, at least, I have removed, and he will again stand forward to the view of the public. I doubt not but his friends will recognize him in the following sheets; and I hope will be introduced to his company with pleasure and profit.

As the Life of Mr. John Wesley comprehends a great variety of subjects, on which men think very differently, it cannot be expected that it should be so written, as to obtain universal approbation. But my leading object in writing this Life, has not been, either general approbation or profit; but truly and fairly to delineate Mr. Wesley's character, in doing which, I hoped to promote religion and virtue.

I return my warmest thanks to those persons who have communicated to me any private papers or letters, that were in their possession; and also to those who have assisted me in the present work, by their advice. In the early part of Mr. John Wesley's Life, I have made use of the original papers relating to him, published by Dr.

Priestley. His collection alone is defective; and so was that in my possession, without his. Dr. Priestley tells us in his preface, "The following letters were given to me by the late Mr. Badcock, as great curiosities of their kind, with a view to their publication after the death of Mr. John Wesley. They were given to him by the grand-daughter of Mr. Samuel Wesley, the eldest brother of John, and I believe with the same view. Mr. John Wesley, as I learned from Mr. Badcock, was very desirous of getting these letters into his possession, but the daughter and grand-daughter of Mr. Samuel, being offended at his conduct, would never deliver them to him." Thus far Dr. Priestley. I am not at all disposed to call Dr. Priestley's veracity in question, but it appears to me there is some mystery in the affair, which I wish to see removed, and which is the reason of bringing the matter forward. Mr. Badcock wrote to Mr. Wesley, on the subject of his brother Samuel's manuscripts, and at the same time sent him one, which he had obtained. His letter is dated South-Moulton, Devonshire, April 22, 1780; and the part of it that relates to the manuscripts, is as follows:

"Rev. Sir,

"The M.S. which accompanies this address, will, I doubt not, carry its own authenticity with it, to *you*. It fell into my hands some time since, by means of the departure of Mr. Mansell, for Ireland, on account of debts contracted at Barnstaple. This person married a daughter of your niece Mrs. Earle. They both died soon after he absconded. Of these particulars, it is likely you are not ignorant. A gentleman of Barnstaple, was for some time in possession of the books and M.SS. Many of them were sold: and others, together with some papers of a family nature, were sent to Mansell; who, if I mistake not, lives with his mother, at or near Dublin.

"I have seen some other M.SS. of your mother's; and wish I could have secured them for you. I think they have much intrinsic excellence: and to a son, they must be doubly acceptable. If I should have it in my power to get more of these papers, I will take care to send them to you."

The attentive reader will perceive, that these two accounts, not only differ, but in one instance flatly contradict each other. After Mr. Badcock's letter, there certainly was a fault somewhere in Dr. Priestley's obtaining possession of the manuscripts: but where the fault lay, I do not pretend to determine.

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THE

LIFE OF THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

BOOK FIRST.

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF THE FAMILY.

CHAPTER I.

Of his Great Grandfather, and Grandfather Wesley.

So far as we can trace back any account of the family, Mr. Wesley's ancestors appear respectable for learning, conspicuous for piety, and firmly attached to those views of Christianity which they had formed from the sacred Scriptures. Bartholomew Wesley, his great grandfather, was educated in one of our universities, and afterwards held the living of Allington in Dorsetshire. When the act of uniformity took place in 1662, he was ejected from his living, and enrolled on the list of fame with those illustrious names, who chose rather to suffer the loss of all things than violate conscience. If we judge from the circumstances of the nation, and the temper of the people at this time, we shall be led to conclude, that the act of uniformity originated with a party; that it was founded in revenge, and had cruelty and oppression for its object. It was however, the means under God, of raising up a cloud of witnesses, who testified to the world by their sufferings, that religion is not a mere engine of the state, but something real, in comparison of which those who feel its influence count all other things but dung and dross. While in the university, Mr. Wesley had applied himself to the study of physic as well as divinity; a practice which had been frequent, and not then fallen wholly into disuse. He was often consulted as a physician while he held his living, and after his ejectment applied himself chiefly to the practice of physic, though he still preached occasionally. It is said that he used a peculiar plainness of speech, which hindered him from becoming a popular preacher. He lived several years after he was silenced; but the death of his son, John Wesley, of whom I shall next speak, affected him so much, that he afterwards declined apace, and did not long survive him.*

* See Nonconformist's Memorial, vol. i. p. 442.

John Wesley, M. A., of New-Inn Hall Oxford, son of the above mentioned gentleman, was grandfather of the late Rev. John Wesley. We have no certain account of the time of his birth, nor of the year when he died. It pleased God to incline him to remember his Creator in the days of his youth, a circumstance which always affords comfort in the future part of life. He had a very humbling sense of sin, and a serious concern for his salvation when a school-boy; and soon after began to keep a diary, in which he recorded the remarkable instances of providential care over him, the method of God's dealings with his soul, and how he found his heart affected under the means of grace, and the occurrences of providence, whether prosperous and pleasing, or afflictive. This method he continued, with very little intermission, to the end of his life.*

During his stay at Oxford, he was taken notice of for his seriousness and diligence. He applied himself particularly to the study of the oriental languages, in which he made great progress. Dr. John Owen, who was at that time vice-chancellor, had a great regard for him, which affords strong evidence both of his abilities and piety at this early period of life. He began to preach occasionally at the age of twenty-two, and in May, 1658, was sent to preach at Whitchurch in Dorsetshire. Soon after the restoration, some of his neighbors gave him a great deal of trouble, because he would not read the common prayer. They complained of him to the Bishop of Bristol, and laid many heavy things to his charge. Mr. Wesley being informed that the bishop desired to speak with him, he waited on his lordship, and has recorded in his diary the conversation that took place on this occasion.

Mr. Wesley's defence of himself turns chiefly on two points, his allegiance to the king; and, his right to preach the Gospel without being ordained according to the rites of the established church. With respect to the first, he solemnly assures the bishop, that the things alleged against him were either invented or mistaken: that, whatever his bitter enemies might say against him, there were others who would give a different character of him; that Mr. Glisson had done it; and that Sir Francis Fulford, being his hearer, would acquaint his lordship concerning him: that he did not think the old Nonconformists were his Majesty's enemies; and that he had conscientiously taken the oath of allegiance, and had faithfully kept it.

With respect to the second point, the bishop informs Mr. Wesley, that if he preached, it must be upon ordination, according to the order of the church of England. Mr. Wesley answers, that, if he meant by ordination the sending spoken of Rom. x., he had it; that he had a mission from God and man; but he was not satisfied in his

* I have taken some pains to discover whether this manuscript be anywhere preserved; but I have not obtained any satisfactory information concerning it. The extracts from it have been preserved by Calamy.

conscience concerning the ordination in the church of England. As to his abilities, he offers to submit to any examination his lordship would appoint; to give him a confession of his faith, or to take any other method that might be required. He then states the reasons which satisfied him, that he ought to preach. These are, 1. That he was devoted to the service from his infancy. 2. That he was educated for it, at school and in the university. 3. That, as a son of the prophets, after having taken his degrees, he preached in the country, being approved of by judicious, able Christians, ministers and others. 4. That it pleased God to seal his labors with success in the conversion of several souls from ignorance and profaneness, to the power of godliness; that such conversions had taken place wherever he had been called to preach; at Radpole, Melcomb, Turnwood, Whitchurch, and at sea. He declares, that if this was not found to be the case upon examination, he was willing to be discharged from his ministry. "I will stand or fall, says he, on the issue thereof." He adds, 5. That the church seeing the presence of God going along with him, they did, by fasting and prayer, in a day set apart for that end, seek an abundant blessing on his endeavors. "A particular church! exclaims the bishop: yes, my lord, says Mr. Wesley, I am not ashamed to own myself a member of one. Bishop. You have no warrant for your particular churches. Wesley. We have a plain, full, and sufficient rule for gospel worship in the New Testament, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. B. We have not. W. The practice of the apostles is a standing rule in those cases which were not extraordinary. B. Not their practice, but their precepts. W. Both precepts and practice. Our duty is not delivered to us in Scripture only by precepts, but by precedents, by promises, by threatenings mixed, not common-place wise. May it please your lordship, we believe that *cultus non institutus est indebitus.* B. It is false. W. The second commandment speaks the same; Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image. B. That is forms of your own invention. W. Bishop Andrews taking notice of *non facies tibi,* satisfied me, that we may not worship God but as commanded. B. You take discipline, church government, and circumstances, for worship. W. You account ceremonies parts of worship. B. Well then, you will justify your preaching, will you, without ordination according to law? W. All these things laid together are satisfactory to me for my procedure therein. B. They are not enough. W. There has been more written in proof of the preaching of gifted persons, with such approbation, than has been answered by any one yet. B. I am glad I heard this from your own mouth. You will stand to your principles, you say? W. I intend it, through the grace of God; and to be faithful to the King's Majesty, however you may deal with me. B. I will not meddle with you. W. Farewell to you, sir. B. Farewell, good Mr. Wesley."

It is to be hoped that the bishop was as good as his word. But there were some persons of influence in his neighborhood who were too much his enemies to permit him to continue quietly at Whitchurch, till the act of uniformity ejected him. For in the beginning of 1662, he was seized on the Lord's day as he was coming out of church, carried to Blandford, and committed to prison. Sir Gerrard Napper was one of the most furious of his enemies, and the most forward in committing him; but meeting with an accident by which he broke his collar-bone, he was so far softened, that he sent some persons to bail Mr. Wesley, and told them if they would not, he would do it himself. How various are the ways by which God brings men to a consciousness of their guilt! Mr. Wesley, however, was set at liberty, though bound over to appear at the next assizes. He appeared accordingly, and came off much better than he expected. On this occasion the good man recorded in his diary the mercy of God to him, in raising up several friends to own him; inclining a solicitor to plead for him, and restraining the wrath of man, so that the judge, though a very passionate man, spoke not an angry word.

Mr. Wesley came joyfully home from the assizes, and preached constantly every Lord's day till August 17th, when he delivered his farewell sermon to a weeping audience, from Acts xx. 32, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." October the 26th, the place was declared vacant by an apparitor, and orders given to sequester the profits; but his people had given him what was due. On the 22d of February, 1663, he quitted Whitchurch, and removed with his family to Melcomb: upon which the corporation made an order against his settlement there, imposing a fine of £20 upon his landlady, and 5s. per week upon him, to be levied by distress. These violent proceedings forced him to leave the town, and he went to Bridgewater, Ilminster, and Taunton, in which places he met with great kindness and friendship from all the three denominations of Dissenters, and was almost every day employed in preaching in the several places to which he went; and got many good acquaintance, and friends, who were afterwards very kind to him and his numerous family. At length a gentleman who had a very good house at Preston, two or three miles from Melcomb, gave him free liberty to live in it without paying any rent. Thither he removed his family in the beginning of May, and there he continued as long as he lived. He records his coming to Preston with great wonder and thankfulness.

Soon after this he had some debates in his mind whether he ought not to remove beyond sea, to Surinam or Maryland; but after much consideration and advice, he determined to take his lot in his native country. He had some scruples also about attending public worship in the established church; but by several arguments in Mr. Nye's

papers, he was determined to do it. After some time he was called by a number of serious Christians at Pool to be their pastor; and in that relation he continued to the day of his death, administering all ordinances to them as opportunity offered. By the Oxford Act he was obliged for a while to withdraw from Preston, and leave his family and people. But he preached wherever he came, if he could but have an audience. Upon his coming to the place of his retirement in March, 1666, he put this question to himself, "What dost thou here, at such a distance from church, wife, children, &c.?" And in his answer, sets down the oath required by government, and then adds the reasons why he could not take it, as several ministers had done; and particularly, that to do it in his own private sense, would be but juggling with God, with the king, and with conscience. But after all this and a good deal more against taking the oath, he thankfully mentions the goodness of God in so overruling the lawmakers, that they did not send the ministers farther from their friends and flocks; and that they had so much time to prepare for their removal, and had liberty to pass on the road to any place. After he had lain hid for some time, he ventured home again, and returned to his labor among his people and among others occasionally. But notwithstanding all his prudence in managing his meetings, he was often disturbed; several times apprehended, and four times imprisoned; once at Pool for half a year, and once at Dorchester for three months: the other confinements were shorter. He was in many straits and difficulties, but wonderfully supported and comforted, and many times very seasonably and surprisingly delivered. The removal of many eminent Christians into another world, who were his intimate acquaintance and kind friends; the great decay of serious religion among many that made a profession, and the increasing rage of the enemies of real godliness, manifestly sunk his spirits. "And having "filled up his part of what is behind of the afflictions of Christ in his "flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church, and finished the "work given him to do, he was taken* out of this vale of tears to "that world where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary "are at rest, when he had not been much longer an inhabitant here "below than his blessed Master, whom he served with his whole "heart, according to the best light he had. The vicar of Preston "would not suffer him to be buried in the church."†

There are several things in this account of Mr. Wesley which deserve the reader's notice. 1. He appears to have made himself master of the controverted points in which he differed from those of the established church, and to have taken up his opinions from a conviction of their truth. 2. He showed an ingenuous mind, free from low cunning, in an open avowal of his sentiments to the bishop.

* I conjecture that he died about the year 1670.

† See the Nonconformist's Memorial, vol. i. p. 478 to 486.

3. He appears to have been remarkably conscientious in all his conduct, and a zealous promoter of genuine piety both in himself and others. 4. He discovered great firmness of mind and an unshaken attachment to his principles in the midst of the most unchristian persecution, and a train of accumulated evils which he suffered on that account. These are prominent features in his character, and which we cannot but admire, however we may differ from him in opinion; they show a mind elevated far above the common level, even of those who have had the advantages of an academical education.

CHAPTER II.

Of his Grandfather, Dr. Annesley.

Samuel Annesley, LL. D., grandfather of the late Mr. Wesley by the mother's side, was born of religious parents at Killingworth near Warwick, in the year 1620, and was their only child. It has been said, that he was first cousin to the Earl of Anglesey. His grandmother, an eminently pious woman, dying before his birth, desired the child, if a boy, might be called Samuel; assigning as the reason of her request, "*I can say I have asked him of the Lord.*" In his infancy he was strongly impressed with the thoughts of being a minister, for which indeed his parents intended him from his birth; and such was the ardor of his mind in pursuing his design, that when about five or six years old, he began a practice, which he afterwards continued, of reading twenty chapters every day in the Bible. The continuance of this practice laid an excellent foundation of useful knowledge, for the future exercise of his ministry. He who studies the Scriptures well, and believes them to be, not merely a sufficient, but the *only* safe rule of faith and practice, will generally exhibit a more uniform character as a minister of the gospel, than he who takes his religious opinions from the subtle reasonings and systems of men. This observation was admirably illustrated and confirmed by the steady, uniform conduct of Dr. Annesley, through some of the most trying situations in which his principles were put to the test.

He lost his father when four years old; but his pious mother took great care of his education; nor did he want the means of obtaining the best instruction, as the paternal estate was considerable. Though a child when he first formed his resolution concerning the ministry, yet he never varied from his purpose: nor was he discouraged by an affecting dream, in which he thought that he was a minister, and sent for by the Bishop of London, to be burnt as a martyr. At the age of fifteen he went to the university of Oxford, and took his degrees in

the usual course. His piety and diligence at Oxford, were so much out of the common way of the place, that he attracted considerable notice. In 1644 he was ordained as chaplain in the ship called the Globe, under the Earl of Warwick, then Lord High Admiral of England. He went to sea with the fleet, and kept a diary of their voyage. But having no great liking to a sea-faring life, he soon quitted it, and settled at Cliff in Kent, where at first he met with a storm more violent than any he had experienced at sea. The minister of this place had been turned out for his barefaced encouragement of licentiousness, as Dr. Williams reports, by attending the meetings of the people for dancing, drinking, and merriment on the Lord's day. The people on this account were exceedingly fond of him, and greatly prejudiced against his successor, Dr. Annesley, who was a man of a very different character. When he first went among them, they rose upon him with spits, forks, and stones, threatening to destroy him. This was no small trial to a young man of about twenty-five years of age. But he remained firm as a rock in his Master's cause, and as the people were not hardened against the evidence of gospel truth, he had some hopes of doing them good, notwithstanding their profaneness and violence. He therefore told them, that, "Let them use him as they would, he was resolved to continue with them, till God had prepared them by his ministry to entertain a better, who should succeed him: but solemnly declared, that when they became so prepared, he would leave the place." His labors were incessant, and the success of his preaching and engaging behavior was surprising; so that in a few years the people were greatly reformed, and became exceedingly fond of him. Though he enjoyed here an income of four hundred pounds per annum, yet he paid so conscientious a regard to his first declaration, that he thought himself bound to leave them; which he accordingly did, and the people, who at his coming threatened to stone him, now parted with him with cries and tears, testifying their affection for him.

A very signal providence directed him to a settlement in London in 1652, by the unanimous choice of the inhabitants of the parish of St. John the Apostle. Soon after he was made lecturer of St. Paul's, and in 1658 Cripplegate was made happy by his settlement there.

He was a man of great uprightness, never regulating his religious profession by his secular interests. He was turned out of his lecture because he would not comply with some things which he deemed extravagant and wrong; he thought conformity in him would be a sin, and he chose to quit a full maintenance rather than injure his conscience. He was acknowledged by all parties to be an Israelite indeed, and yet he suffered much for Nonconformity; but such was the spirit of party, that an angel from heaven would have been persecuted and abused, if he had been a Dissenter. In his sufferings God often appeared remarkably for him; one person died while

signing a warrant to apprehend him. He afterwards suffered, because he thought it his duty to bear witness for the old truth against Antinomianism. His integrity made him a stranger to all tricks or little artifices to serve his temporal interest; and his charitable and unsuspecting temper, sometimes gave those who practised them, an opportunity to impose upon him.

In ministerial labors he was abundant. Before he was silenced, he often preached three times a day; during the troubles almost every day; afterwards twice every Lord's day. His sermons were not raw and uninteresting, but instructive and affecting: and his manner of delivery very peculiarly expressed his heartiness in the things he spoke.

His care and labor extended to every place where he might be useful. In some measure the care of all the churches was upon him. When any place wanted a minister, he used his endeavors to procure one for them; when any minister was oppressed by poverty, he soon employed himself for his relief. "O! how many places, says Dr. Williams, had sat in darkness, how many ministers had been starved, if Dr. Annesley had died thirty years since!" He was the chief, often the sole instrument in the education as well as the subsistence of several ministers. The sick, the widows, the orphans, whom he relieved were innumerable. As a minister, his usefulness was extensive, and God kept him faithful in his work to the last, for which he thus thanked God on his death-bed: "Blessed be God, I can say, I have been faithful in the ministry above fifty-five years." Many called him father, as the instrument of their conversion; and many called him a comforter.

He had uninterrupted peace, and assurance of God's love and favor, for above thirty years of the latter part of his life. This assurance had not one cloud in all his last sickness. A little before his departure, his desire of death appeared strong, and his soul was filled with the foretaste of glory. He often said, "Come my dearest Jesus, the nearer the more precious, the more welcome." Another time his joy was so great, that in ecstasy he cried out, "I cannot contain it: what manner of love is this to a poor worm? I cannot express the thousandth part of what praise is due to Thee! We know not what we do when we offer at praising God for his mercies. It is but little I can give thee, but, Lord help me to give thee my all. I will die praising thee, and rejoice that others can praise thee better. I shall be satisfied with thy likeness; satisfied! satisfied! Oh! my dearest Jesus, I come!" Thus died this excellent man, December 31, 1696, in the 77th year of his age, and left us an example how to live and how to die.

Dr. Annesley had naturally a strong, robust constitution, which enabled him to undergo great labor and fatigue. He was seldom sick, and could endure the coldest weather without hat, gloves, or

fire. For many years he scarcely ever drank anything but water, and even to his last sickness, his sight continued so strong, that he could read the smallest print without spectacles. His piety, diligence, and zeal, made him highly esteemed by the Dissenters. He assisted at the first public ordination they had, after the act of uniformity, when Dr. Calamy and six others were ordained in the Dissenting place of worship in Little St. Hellen's, in 1694.*

CHAPTER III.

Of Samuel Wesley Senior.

Mr. John Wesley, of whom I have spoken above, left two sons, Matthew and Samuel; of the rest of the children we know nothing. As the family had been greatly reduced by persecution, these two brothers must have experienced some difficulties in their education. Their mother was a niece of Dr. Thomas Fuller;† but it does not appear that they received any assistance from this branch of the family. By industry they surmounted every difficulty that lay before them, and rose to very respectable and useful situations in life. Matthew Wesley, following the example of his grandfather, studied physic, and afterwards made a fortune by his practice.‡ Samuel, the father of the late Mr. John Wesley, was born about the year 1662, or perhaps a little earlier; but he could not, I think, have been more than eight or nine years old when his father died. The first thing that shook his attachment to the Dissenters was, a defence of the death of King Charles the First, and the proceedings of the Calve's Head club.§ These things shocked him; and though it is certain that the Dissenters in general disapproved of the king's death, and that the proceedings of a club ought not to be attributed to a large body of men, who had no connection with the members of it, and

* See Nonconformist's Memorial, vol. ii. p. 238. For the Account of Dr. Annesley, see the Funeral Sermon Dr. Williams preached for him; and Nonconformist's Memorial, vol. i. p. 104.

† Nonconformist's Memorial, vol. i. p. 478. Dr. Thomas Fuller was born in 1608. At twenty-three years of age his merit procured him the fellowship of Sidney College Cambridge, and a prebend in the Cathedral of Salisbury. During the Protectorate, he held the living of Waltham Abbey, and the lecture of St. Bride's Fleet Street. After the restoration he recovered his prebend, and was made chaplain extraordinary to his Majesty. It is said that he had a most uncommon memory. He wrote the Church History of Britain in folio; A Pisgah-sight of Palestine, and several other works. He died in 1661, and his funeral was attended by 200 of his brethren of the ministry.

‡ We shall afterwards see some verses on the death of this gentleman by his niece, Mrs. Wright.

§ Notes of Samuel Wesley to his elegy on his father. For this, and some other original papers, of great use in this work, I am obliged to a private friend.

differed greatly in opinion from them; yet they had such an effect on his mind, that he separated himself from the dissenting interest while yet a boy, as appears from the following lines in his son's elegy upon him:

> "With op'ning life his early worth began,
> The boy misleads not, but foreshows the man.
> Directed wrong, tho' first he miss'd the way,
> Train'd to mistake, and disciplin'd to stray:
> Not long—for reason gilded error's night,
> And doubts well founded shot a gleam of light."

He spent some time at a private academy before he went to the university; but where, it is not said. About the age of sixteen he walked to Oxford, and entered himself of Exeter College. He had now only two pounds sixteen shillings; and no prospect of future supplies, but from his own exertions. By industry, I suppose by assisting the younger students, and instructing any who chose to employ him, he supported himself till he took his Bachelor's degree; without any preferment or assistance from his friends, except five shillings. This circumstance does him great honor, and shows him to have been a young man of wonderful diligence and resolution. Many feel his difficulties, but few are capable of his vigorous and continued exertions to overcome them in so honorable a way, and with such success. He now came to London, having increased his little stock to ten pounds fifteen shillings. He was ordained deacon, and obtained a curacy, which he held one year, when he was appointed chaplain on board the fleet. This situation he held one year only, and then returned to London, and served a cure for two years. During this time he married, and his wife brought him a son. In this period he wrote several pieces, which brought him into notice and esteem, and a small living was given him in the country. I am not certain whether it was during his residence here, or while he was chaplain on board the fleet, that the following circumstance happened, but I suppose the latter. He was strongly solicited by the friends of King James II. to support the measures of the court in favor of popery, with promises of preferment if he would comply with the king's desire. But he absolutely refused to read the king's declaration; and though surrounded with courtiers, soldiers, and informers, he preached a bold and pointed discourse against it, from Daniel iii. 17, 18. "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." His son Samuel describes this circumstance in the following lines:*

* In the poem entitled the Parish Priest, intended as a description of his father's character.

"When zealous James unhappy sought the way
T' establish Rome by arbitrary sway;
In vain were bribes shower'd by the guilty crown,
He sought no favor, as he fear'd no frown.
Secure in faith, exempt from worldly views,
He dar'd the declaration to refuse;
Then from the sacred pulpit boldly show'd
The dauntless Hebrews, true to Israel's God,
Who spake regardless of their king's commands,
'The God we serve can save us from thy hands;
If not, O monarch, know we choose to die,
Thy gods alike, and threatenings we defy;
No power on earth our faith has e'er controll'd,
We scorn to worship idols, tho' of gold.'
Resistless truth damp'd all the audience round,
The base informer sicken'd at the sound;
Attentive courtiers conscious stood amaz'd,
And soldiers silent trembled as they gaz'd.
No smallest murmur of distaste arose,
Abash'd and vanquish'd seem'd the church's foes.
So when like zeal their bosoms did inspire,
The Jewish martyrs walk'd unhurt in fire."

In this noble instance of integrity and firmness of mind, Mr. Wesley has given us an unequivocal proof that a person of high church principles may be a true friend to the protestant cause, and the liberty of the subject. It is evident that he as much disliked the arbitrary proceedings of King James, as the religion which he endeavored to introduce. When the glorious Revolution took place in 1688, Mr. Wesley most cordially approved of it, and was the first who wrote in defence of it. This work he dedicated to Queen Mary,* who in consequence of it, gave him the living of Epworth in Lincolnshire, about the year 1693; and in 1723 he was presented to the living of Wroote in the same county, in addition to Epworth.

Mr. Wesley held the living of Epworth upwards of forty years. His abilities would have done him credit in a more conspicuous situation; and had Queen Mary lived much longer, it is probable that he would not have spent so great a part of his life in such an obscure corner of the kingdom. In the beginning of the year 1705, he printed a poem on the battle of Blenheim, which happened the year before, with which the Duke of Marlborough was so well pleased, that he made him chaplain to Colonel Lepelle's regiment, which was to stay in England some time. In consequence of the same poem, a noble lord sent for him to London, promising to procure him a prebend. But unhappily he was at this time engaged in a controversy with the Dissenters: several things had been published on each side, and the controversy was carried on in the usual way, in which the disputants on both sides are generally more remarkable for showing the violence of their passions than the goodness of their cause. In the first part

* MSS. papers.

of Queen Ann's reign, the Dissenters had a very powerful influence in both houses of parliament, and at court; and were now preparing to present a petition to the House of Lords, praying for justice against the authors of several pamphlets written in opposition to them, and against Mr. Wesley in particular; but were dissuaded from taking this step by two members of that house. They had however interest enough to hinder Mr. Wesley from obtaining a prebend; they soon also worked him out of the chaplainship of the regiment, and brought several other very severe sufferings upon him and his family.*

As a pastor, he was indefatigable in the duties of his office: a constant preacher, feeding the flock with the pure doctrines of the gospel, according to his ability; diligent in visiting the sick, and administering such advice as their situations required; and attentive to the conduct of all who were under his care, so that every one in his parish became an object of his attention and concern. No strangers could settle in his parish but he presently knew it, and made himself acquainted with them. We have a proof of this from a letter he wrote to the Bishop of Lincoln, after being absent from home a very short time. "After my return to Epworth, says he, and looking a little among my people, I found there were two strangers come hither, both of whom I have discovered to be papists, though they come to church; and I have hopes of making one or both of them good members of the church of England."

But this conscientious regard to parochial duties, did not divert him from literary pursuits. A man who spends all his time in the most useful manner he can, may diversify his employments, and accomplish by diligence what appears to others impracticable. His favorite study seems to have been the original Scriptures, in which he was indefatigable; a practice which can never be too much commended in a minister of the gospel, when joined with a proper attention to practical duties.

The following extracts from two of his letters to his son, the late Mr. John Wesley, will give some idea of his diligence in this respect; and the second of them will show us his opinion of a subject on which learned men have been much divided.

"Jan. 26, 1725.

"I have some time since designed an edition of the holy Bible in octavo, in the Hebrew, Chaldee, Septuagint, and the Vulgate; and have made some progress in it. What I desire of you on this article is, 1. That you would immediately fall to work, and read diligently the Hebrew text in the Polyglott, and collate it exactly with the Vulgate, writing all, even the least variations or differences between them. 2. To these I would have you add the Samaritan text in the last column but one; which is the very same with the Hebrew,

* Mr. C. Wesley's papers.

except in some very few places, differing only in the Samaritan character, which I think is the true old Hebrew. In twelve months' time, you will get through the Pentateuch; for I have done it four times the last year, and am going over it the fifth, and collating the two Greek versions, the Alexandrian and the Vatican, with what I can get of Symachus and Theodotion," &c.

Mr. John Wesley was in the twenty-second year of his age, not yet ordained, nor had he attained any preferment in the university, when he received this letter from his father. It gives a pleasing view of his progress in biblical learning at this early period of life, and shows his father's confidence in his critical knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures. The following letter was written in 1731, and very clearly states the old gentleman's opinion of the translation of the Seventy, after a most laborious examination of it.

"I find in your letter an account of a learned friend you have, who has a great veneration for the Septuagint, and thinks that in some instances it corrects the present Hebrew. I do not wonder that he is of that mind; as it is likely he has read Vossius and other learned men, who magnify this translation so as to depreciate the original. When I first began to study the Scriptures in earnest, and had read it over several times, I was inclined to the same opinion. What then increased my respect for it was, 1. That I thought I found many texts in the Scriptures more happily explained than in our own or other versions. 2. That many words and phrases in the New Testament, can hardly be so well understood without having recourse to this translation. 3. That both our Saviour and his apostles so frequently quote it. These considerations held me in a blind admiration of the Septuagint; and though I did not esteem them absolutely infallible, yet I hardly dared to trust my own eyes, or think they were frequently mistaken. But upon reading this translation over very often, and comparing it verbatim with the Hebrew, I was forced by plain evidence of fact to be of another mind. That which led me to it was, some mistakes (I think not less than a thousand) in places indifferent, either occasioned by the ambiguous sense of some Hebrew words, or by the mistake of some letters, as *daleth* for *resh*, and vice versa; which every one knows are very much alike in the old Hebrew character. But what fully determined my judgment was, that I found, or thought I found, very many places which appeared purposely altered for no very justifiable reason. These at last came so thick upon me, in my daily reading, that I began to note them down; not a few instances of which you will see in the dissertation I shall send you in my next packet. I would have you communicate it to your learned friend, with my compliments, earnestly desiring him, as well as you, to peruse it with the greatest prejudice you can; and after you have thoroughly weighed the whole, as I think the subject

deserves, to make the strongest objections you are able against any article of it, where you are not convinced by my observations. For I should not deserve a friend if I did not esteem those my best friends who do their endeavors to set me right, where I may possibly be mistaken, especially in a matter of great moment."

These two extracts give an interesting view of this gentleman's learning, diligent study of the Scriptures, and candor, in each of which he holds forth to us an example highly deserving of imitation.

Mr. Wesley was a voluminous writer, which in most cases is a disadvantage to an author, whatever his abilities may be. His Latin commentary on the book of Job is a most elaborate performance; but the subject of this book, and the language in which the commentary is written, are but ill adapted to the generality of modern readers. As a poet he has been censured by Garth and others; though when he failed, it was perhaps as much owing to the difficulty of the subject, as to want of poetical abilities. In an early edition of the Dunciad, he and Dr. Watts were associated together, and involved in the same censure. But it is well known that the earlier editions of this poem were all surreptitious, in which the blanks were filled up by the mere caprice or envy of the editors, without any regard to the intention of the author. Thus, in a surreptitious edition printed in Ireland, the blank in the 104th verse of the first book was filled up with Dryden instead of Dennis, which, no doubt, was far enough from the intention of Mr. Pope. With the same propriety and good judgment, in the surreptitious editions, the names Wesley and Watts were inserted thus, W——ly, W——s, in the 126th line of the same book, but they never appeared in any edition published by Mr. Pope. The lines originally stood thus:

> "A Gothic Vatican! of Greece and Rome,
> Well purg'd, and worthy Withers, Quarles, and Blome."

In a London edition of the Dunciad, printed in 1729, there is the following note on the last of these lines, "It was printed in the surreptitious editions W——ly, W——s, who were persons eminent for good life; the one writ the life of Christ in verse, the other some valuable pieces of the lyric kind on pious subjects. The line is here restored according to its original."

Of Mr. Wesley's larger poetical performances, his son Samuel passes the following candid but impartial judgment, in the elegy above mentioned.

> "Whate'er his strains, still glorious was his end,
> Faith to assert and virtue to defend.
> He sung how God the Saviour deign'd t' expire,
> With Vida's piety though not his fire;
> Deduc'd his Maker's praise from age to age,
> Through the long annals of the sacred page."

Most of his smaller pieces are excellent. I shall insert the following, both for its intrinsic beauty, and as a specimen of his poetical talents.

EUPOLIS'S HYMN TO THE CREATOR.

THE OCCASION.

Part of a (new) dialogue between Plato and Eupolis the Poet—the rest not extant.*

Eupolis. But is it not a little hard, that you should banish all our fraternity from your new commonwealth? What hurt has father Homer done that you dismiss him among the rest?

Plato. Certainly the blind old gentleman lies with the best grace in the world. But a lie handsomely told, debauches the taste and morals of a people. Besides, his tales of the gods are intolerable, and derogate in the highest degree from the dignity of the Divine Nature.

Eupolis. But do you really think that those faults are inseparable from poetry? May not the One Supreme be sung, without any intermixture of them?

Plato. I must own I hardly ever saw any thing of that nature. But I shall be glad to see you, or any other, attempt and succeed in it. On that condition, I will gladly exempt you from the fate of your brother poets.

Eupolis. I am far from pretending to be a standard. But I will do the best I can.

THE HYMN.

Author of Being, source of light,
With unfading beauties bright,
Fulness, goodness, rolling round
Thy own fair orb without a bound:
Whether thee thy suppliants call
Truth or good, or one or all,
Ei, or Jaa; thee we hail
Essence that can never fail,
Grecian or Barbaric name,
Thy steadfast being still the same.

Thee when morning greets the skies
With rosy cheeks and humid eyes;
Thee when sweet declining day
Sinks in purple waves away;
Thee will I sing, O parent Jove,
And teach the world to praise and love.

* Eupolis was an Athenian. He is mentioned several times by Horace, and once by Persius; and was in high estimation at Athens for his poetical compositions, though he severely lashed the vices of the age he lived in. He was killed in an engagement at sea between the Athenians and Lacedemonians, and his death was so much lamented at Athens, that they made a law, that no poet should go to battle. He lived about four hundred years before Christ.

Yonder azure vault on high,
Yonder blue, low, liquid sky,
Earth, on its firm basis plac'd,
And with circling waves embrac'd,
All creating pow'r confess,
All their mighty Maker bless.
Thou shak'st all nature with thy nod,
Sea, earth and air confess the God:
Yet does thy pow'rful hand sustain
Both earth and heav'n, both firm and main.
Scarce can our daring thought arise
To thy pavilion in the skies;
Nor can Plato's self declare
The bliss, the joy, the rapture there.
Barren above thou dost not reign,
But circled with a glorious train:
The sons of God, the sons of light
Ever joying in thy sight;
(For thee their silver harps are strung)
Ever beauteous, ever young,
Angelic forms their voices raise
And through heav'n's arch resound thy praise.

The feather'd souls that swim the air,
And bathe in liquid ether there,
The lark, precentor of the choir,
Leading them higher still and higher,
Listen and learn; th' angelic notes
Repeating in their warbling throats:
And ere to soft repose they go
Teach them to their lords below:
On the green turf their mossy nest,
The ev'ning anthem swells their breast.
Thus like thy golden chain from high
Thy praise unites the earth and sky.

Source of light, thou bid'st the sun
On his burning axles run;
The stars like dust around him fly
And strew the area of the sky.
He drives so swift his race above
Mortals can't perceive him move,
So smooth his course, oblique or straight,
Olympus shakes not with his weight.
As the queen of solemn night
Fills at his vase her orbs of light,
Imparted lustre; thus we see
The solar virtue shines by thee.

*Eiresione,** we 'll no more
Imaginary pow'r adore;
Since oil, and wool, and cheerful wine,
And life-sustaining bread are thine.

* This word signifies a kind of garland composed of a branch of olive, wrapt about with wool, and loaded with all kinds of fruits of the earth, as a token of peace and plenty. The poet says he will no more worship the *imaginary* power, supposed to be the giver of these things; but the great *Pan*, the creator from whom they all proceed.

Thy herbage, O great Pan, sustains
The flocks that graze our Attic plains;
The olive with fresh verdure crown'd,
Rises pregnant from the ground;
At thy command it shoots and springs,
And a thousand blessings brings.
Minerva only is thy mind,
Wisdom and bounty to mankind.
The fragrant thyme, the bloomy rose,
Herb and flow'r, and shrub that grows
On Thessalian Tempe's plain
Or where the rich Sabeans reign,
That treat the taste or smell or sight,
For food or med'cine, or delight;
Planted by thy parent care,
Spring and smile and flourish there.

O ye nurses of soft dreams,
Reedy brooks and winding streams,
Or murmuring o'er the pebbles sheen
Or sliding through the meadows green,
Or where through matted sedge you creep,
Trav'lling to your parent deep:
Sound his praise by whom you rose,
That sea which neither ebbs nor flows.

O ye immortal woods and groves,
Which th' enamor'd student loves;
Beneath whose venerable shade,
For thought and friendly converse made,
Fam'd Hecadem, old hero lies,
Whose shrine is shaded from the skies,
And through the gloom of silent night
Projects from far its trembling light;
You, whose roots descend as low,
As high in air your branches grow;
Your leafy arms to heav'n extend,
Bend your heads, in homage bend:
Cedars and pines that wave above,
And the oak belov'd of Jove.

Omen, monster, prodigy,
Or nothing are, or Jove from thee!
Whether varied nature play,
Or re-invers'd thy will obey,
And to rebel man declare
Famine, plague, or wasteful war.
Laugh ye profane, who dare despise
The threat'ning vengeance of the skies,
Whilst the pious on his guard,
Undismay'd is still prepar'd:
Life or death his mind's at rest,
Since what thou send'st must needs be best.

No evil can from thee proceed!
'T is only suffer'd, not decreed.
Darkness is not from the sun,
Nor mount the shades till he is gone:

Then does night obscene arise
From Erebus, and fill the skies,
Fantastic forms the air invade,
Daughters of nothing and of shade.

Can we forget thy guardian care,
Slow to punish, prone to spare;
Thou brak'st the haughty Persian's pride,
That dar'd old ocean's pow'r deride;
Their shipwrecks strew'd the Eubean wave,
At Marathon they found a grave.
O ye blest Greeks who there expir'd,
For Greece with pious ardor fir'd,
What shrines or altars shall we raise
To secure your endless praise?
Or need we monuments supply,
To rescue what can never die!

And yet a greater hero far
(Unless great Socrates could err)
Shall rise to bless some future day,
And teach to live, and teach to pray.
Come, unknown instructor, come!
Our leaping hearts shall make thee room;
Thou with Jove our vows shalt share,
Of Jove and thee we are the care.

O Father, King, whose heav'nly face
Shines serene on all thy race,
We thy magnificence adore,
And thy well-known aid implore;
Nor vainly for thy help we call;
Nor can we want—for thou art all.

Every good judge, I apprehend, will readily allow that the author of these verses did not want talents for poetry. But wherever we fix his standing in the scale of learning and abilities, he still rises higher in our view of genuine piety, and a firm attachment to justice, mercy and truth, in various trying situations of life. His integrity was conspicuous, and his conduct uniform. As he had chosen God and his service for his own portion, he chose the same for his children also. When two of his sons were pursuing a course of piety at Oxford, which threw their future prospects of preferment into a cloud not likely to be dissipated, he encouraged them in it, choosing rather that he and his children should suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Few men have been so diligent in the pastoral office as he was; none perhaps more so. Though his income may be called small, and his family large, he had always something to give to those in distress. In conversation he was grave, yet instructive, lively, and full of anecdote; and this talent the late Mr. Wesley possessed in a high degree. His last moments were as conspicuous for resignation and christian fortitude, as his life had been for zeal and diligence. His two sons, Mr. John

and Charles Wesley, were both with him when he died, and Mr. Charles has given the following interesting account of his death, in a letter to his brother Samuel, dated April 30, 1735.

Dear Brother,

After all your desire of seeing my father alive, you are at last assured you must see his face no more till he is raised in incorruption. You have reason to envy us who could attend him in the last stage of his illness. The few words he could utter I saved, and hope never to forget. Some of them were, "Nothing is too much to suffer for Heaven. The weaker I am in body, the stronger and more sensible support I feel from God. There is but a step between me and death; to-morrow I would see you all with me round this table, that we may once more drink of the cup of blessing, before we drink it new in the kingdom of God. With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I die." The morning he was to communicate, he was so exceeding weak and full of pain, that he could not without the utmost difficulty receive the elements, often repeating, "Thou shakest me, thou shakest me;" but immediately after receiving, there followed the most visible alteration. He appeared full of faith and peace, which extended even to his body; for he was so much better, that we almost hoped he would have recovered. The fear of death he entirely conquered, and at last gave up his latest human desires of finishing Job, paying his debts, and seeing you. He often laid his hand upon my head, and said, "Be steady! The christian faith will surely revive in this kingdom; you shall see it, though I shall not." To my sister Emily he said, "Do not be concerned at my death, God will then begin to manifest himself to my family." When we were met about him, his usual expression was, "Now let me hear you talk of heaven." On my asking him whether he did not find himself worse, he replied, "O my Charles, I feel a great deal; God chastens me with strong pain, but I praise him for it, I thank him for it, I love him for it." On the 25th his voice failed him, and nature seemed entirely spent, when, on my brother's asking, whether he was not near heaven, he answered distinctly, and with the most of hope and triumph that could be expressed in sounds, "Yes, I am." He spoke once more, just after my brother had used the commendatory prayer; his last words were, "Now you have done all!" This was about half an hour after six, from which time till sunset, he made signs of offering up himself, till my brother again having used the commendatory prayer, the very moment it was finished he expired. His passage was so smooth and insensible, that notwithstanding the stopping of his pulse, and ceasing of all sign of life and motion, we continued over him a considerable time, in doubt whether the soul was departed or no. My mother, who for several days before he died, hardly ever went into his chamber but she was carried out again in a fit, was

far less shocked at the news than we expected, and told us that now she was heard, in his having so easy a death, and her being strengthened so to bear it."

In going through this work, let the reader consider himself as travelling slowly on a pleasant road where a variety of objects, highly worthy of his attention and regard, present themselves to his view. In passing along this little distance, we have as it were stood by, and seen two ministers of the gospel die; the one a Nonconformist, and the other an High Churchman. As we see them approach the entrance on eternity, the scene becomes interesting, and will suggest to the reader many important reflections. Dropping their singularities of opinion, and all party distinctions, we now view them coalescing, and becoming one in Christ Jesus. Animated with the same spirit of devotion, they look up to God as their common Father through the same Mediator and Saviour; they praise him for the same mercies, and looking forward to his kingdom and glory with the same humble confidence, both triumph over death as he draws nigh to them: they give satisfactory evidence, that they were united to Christ, belonged to the same family, and were heirs of the same heavenly inheritance, notwithstanding the external differences in their mode of worship. These considerations should teach us to be careful, not to over-value the external differences among Christians, nor to exalt the discriminating distinctions of parties into the rank of fundamental articles of christianity. As long as we lay the same foundation, and endeavor to build upon it gold, silver, and precious stones, we ought to have fellowship with each other as brethren, notwithstanding the different manner in which we manage the materials, and give a varied appearance to the building.

CHAPTER IV.

Of Mrs. Susannah Wesley.

Mrs. Susannah Wesley, the mother of the late Mr. John Wesley, was the youngest daughter of Dr. Samuel Annesley, and a few years younger than her husband. Being educated in a very religious family, she early imbibed a reverence for religion; but having strong understanding, and a great thirst for knowledge, she soon found herself dissatisfied with believing on the authority of her teachers, and was determined, as far as possible, to see what evidence there was for the truth of those things she was required to believe. Before she was thirteen years old, she had examined the whole controversy between the Dissenters and the established church, and from that time became a member of the church of England. And though different men may,

and will, judge variously of the choice she made, yet all must acknowledge that this effort to judge for herself at so early an age, and in so complicated a subject, was singularly great, and showed uncommon resolution and strength of mind. She afterwards examined the evidences of natural and revealed religion with scrupulous attention, and under every article set down the reasons which determined her to believe it. Of these things she speaks thus, in a letter to her son, Samuel Wesley, dated October 11th, 1709.

"There is nothing I now desire to live for, but to do some small service to my children; that, as I have brought them into the world, I may, if it please God, be an instrument of doing good to their souls. I had been several years collecting from my little reading, but chiefly from my own observation and experience, some things which I hoped might be useful to you all. I had begun to correct and form all into a little manual: wherein I designed you should have seen what were the particular reasons which prevailed on me to believe the Being of a God, and the grounds of natural religion, together with the motives that induced me to embrace the faith of Jesus Christ; under which was comprehended my own private reasons for the truth of revealed religion. And because I was educated among the Dissenters, and there was something remarkable in my leaving them at so early an age, not being full thirteen, I had drawn up an account of the whole transaction, under which I had included the main of the controversy between them and the established church, as far as it had come to my knowledge; and then followed the reasons which had determined my judgment to the preference of the church of England. I had fairly transcribed a great part of it, when, you writing to me for some directions about receiving the sacrament, I began a short discourse on that subject, intending to send them all together; but before I could finish my design, the flames consumed both this and all my other writings.* I would have you, at your leisure, begin to do something like this for yourself, and write down what are the principles on which you build your faith; and though I cannot possibly recover all I formerly wrote, yet I will gladly assist you what I can, in explaining any difficulty that may occur."

In one of her private meditations she reckons the following among the signal mercies which God had bestowed upon her. "Born in a christian country: early initiated and instructed in the first principles of the christian religion: good examples in parents and several of the family: good books and ingenious conversation: preserved from ill accidents, once from violent death: married to a religious orthodox man: by him first drawn off from the Socinian heresy, and afterwards confirmed and strengthened by Bishop Bull."†

About the year 1700, she made a resolution to spend one hour

* When their house was burnt down in February, 1709.

† In the manuscript it stands thus, B. B., which I believe is intended for Bishop Bull.

morning and evening in private devotion, in prayer and meditation; and she religiously kept it ever after, unless sickness hindered, or some absolutely necessary business of her family obliged her to shorten the time. If opportunity offered, she spent some time at noon in this religious and profitable employment. She generally wrote down her thoughts on different subjects at these times; and great numbers of her meditations have been preserved in her own hand-writing. I shall select a few, and make some extracts from others; because they show us this excellent woman in her most private retirement, conversing without disguise with him who knows the heart.

Noon. "To know God only as a philosopher; to have the most sublime and curious speculations concerning his essence, attributes and providence; to be able to demonstrate his Being from all or any of the works of nature, and to discourse with the greatest propriety and eloquence of his existence and operations; will avail us nothing, unless at the same time we know him experimentally; unless the heart know him to be its supreme good, its only happiness; unless a man feel and acknowledge that he can find no repose, no peace, no joy, but in loving and being beloved by him, and does accordingly rest in him as the centre of his being, the fountain of his pleasures, the origin of all virtue and goodness, his light, his life, his strength, his all; in a word, his Lord, his God. Thus let me ever know thee, O God!"

Evening. "The mind of man is naturally so corrupt, and all the powers thereof so weakened, that we cannot possibly aspire vigorously towards God, or have any clear perception of spiritual things, without his assistance. Nothing less than the same Almighty power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead, can raise our souls from the death of sin to a life of holiness.—To know God experimentally is altogether supernatural, and what we can never attain to, but by the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ. By virtue of what he has done and suffered, and is now doing in heaven for us, we obtain the Holy Spirit, who is the best instructor, the most powerful teacher we can possibly have; without whose agency, all other means of grace would be ineffectual. How evidently does the Holy Spirit concur with the means of grace? and how certainly does he assist and strengthen the soul, if it be but sincere and hearty in its endeavors to avoid any evil, or perform any good. To have a good desire, a fervent aspiration towards God shall not pass unregarded. I have found by long experience, that it is of great use to accustom one's self to enter into solemn engagements with God against any particular sin; but then I would have them never made for a longer time than from morning till night, and from night till morning, that so the impression they make on the mind may be always fresh and lively. This was many years tried with good success in the case of ——. Glory be to thee, O Lord."

Evening. "Give God the praise for any well spent day. But I am yet unsatisfied, because I do not enjoy enough of God; I apprehend myself at too great a distance from him; I would have my soul united more closely to him by faith and love—I can appeal to his omniscience, that I would love him above all things. He that made me, knows my desires, my expectations, my joys all centre in him, and that it is he himself I desire; it is his favor, his acceptance, the communications of his grace, that I earnestly wish for more than any thing in the world; and that I have no relish or delight in any thing when under apprehensions of his displeasure. I rejoice in his essential glory and blessedness: I rejoice in my relation to him, that he is my Father, my Lord, and my God. I rejoice that he has power over me, and desire to live in subjection to him; that he condescends to punish me when I transgress his laws, as a father chasteneth the son whom he loveth—I thank him that he has brought me so far, and will beware of despairing of his mercy for the time which is yet to come; but will give God the glory of his free grace."

Morning. "It is too common with me upon receiving any light, or new supply of grace, to think, now I have gained my point, and may say, 'Soul, take thine ease;' by which means I think not of going any further; or else fall into dejection of spirit, upon a groundless fear, that I shall soon lose what I have gained, and in a little time be never the better for it. Both these are sins. The first proceeds from immoderate love of present ease and spiritual sloth; the other from want of faith in the all-sufficiency of my Saviour.

"We must never take up our rest on this side of heaven; nor think we have enough of grace, or enjoy enough of God till we are perfectly renewed and sanctified in body, soul, and spirit; till we are admitted into that blessed region of pure and happy spirits, where we shall enjoy the beatific vision according to the measure of our capacities. Nor must we, out of a pretended humility, because we are unworthy of the least mercy, dare to dispute or question the sufficiency of the merits of Jesus Christ. It was impossible for God incarnate to undertake more than he is able to perform."

Morning. "Though man is born to trouble, yet I believe there is scarce a man to be found upon earth, but, take the whole course of his life, hath more mercies than afflictions, and much more pleasure than pain. I am sure it has been so in my case. I have many years suffered much pain, and great bodily infirmities; but I have likewise enjoyed great intervals of rest and ease. And those very sufferings have, by the blessing of God, been of excellent use, and proved the most proper means of reclaiming me from a vain and sinful conversation, insomuch, that I cannot say I had better have been without this affliction, this disease, loss, want, contempt, or reproach. All my sufferings, by the admirable management of Omnipotent goodness, have concurred to promote my spiritual and eternal good. And if I

have not reaped that advantage by them which I might have done, it is merely owing to the perverseness of my own will, and frequent lapses into present things, and unfaithfulness to the good Spirit of God; who, notwithstanding all my prevarications, all the stupid opposition I have made, has never totally abandoned me. Eternal glory be to thee, O Lord!"

EVENING. "If to esteem and to have the highest reverence for thee! if constantly and sincerely to acknowledge thee, the supreme, the only desirable good, be to love thee, I do love thee!

"If comparatively to despise and undervalue all the world contains, which is esteemed great, fair, or good; if earnestly and constantly to desire thee, thy favor, thy acceptance, thyself, rather than any or all things thou hast created, be to love thee, I do love thee!

"If to rejoice in thy essential majesty and glory! if to feel a vital joy o'erspread and cheer the heart at each perception of thy blessedness, at every thought that thou art God; that all things are in thy power; that there is none superior or equal to thee—be to love thee, I do love thee!"

Notwithstanding Mrs. Wesley allotted two hours in the day for meditation and prayer in private, no woman was ever more diligent in business, or attentive to family affairs than she was. Remarkable for method and good arrangement both in her studies and business, she saved much time, and kept her mind free from perplexity. She had nineteen children, ten of whom, at least, grew up to be educated, and this duty fell upon her; and it was almost impossible for the children to have had a better instructor. From several things which I find in her papers, it appears to me that she had acquired some knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages in her youth, though she never makes any pretensions to it. She had read much and thought deeply, and in general very accurately, on every part of natural and revealed religion, and on the common affairs of life. She had studied human nature well, and knew how to adapt her discourse either to youth or age; and without this no person is properly qualified to instruct others. She had set out in life with a determination to think and judge for herself; and not to be influenced by custom in matters of importance, unless when custom appeared to be founded in reason and truth. It was this principle which governed her in the education of her children; for disapproving of the common methods of governing and instructing youth, she adopted those methods which appeared to her the most rational and proper. Their rising, dressing, eating, exercise, and every thing that related to them was managed by rule, unless when sickness hindered. They were very early taught obedience to their parents, and to wait their decision in every thing they were to have or do. As soon as they could speak, they were taught the Lord's prayer, and made to repeat it at rising and bed time constantly. As they grew bigger, they were

taught a short prayer for their parents, and some collects; a short catechism, and some portion of scripture, as their memories could bear. They were early made to distinguish the Sabbath from other days; and were soon taught to be still at family prayers, and to ask a blessing immediately after, which they used to do by signs before they could kneel or speak. Her method of teaching them to read was, I think, peculiar to herself, and deserves to be taken notice of; I shall give it in her own words, in a letter to Mr. John Wesley. "None of them were taught to read till five years old, except Kezzy, in whose case I was overruled; and she was more years in learning than any of the rest had been months. The way of teaching was this: the day before a child began to learn, the house was set in order, every one's work appointed them, and a charge given that none should come into the room from nine till twelve, or from two till five, which were our school hours. One day was allowed the child wherein to learn its letters, and each of them did in that time know all its letters, great and small, except Molly and Nancy, who were a day and a half before they knew them perfectly; for which I then thought them very dull: but the reason why I thought them so was, because the rest learned them so readily, and your brother Samuel, who was the first child I ever taught, learnt the alphabet in a few hours. He was five years old on the tenth of February; the next day he began to learn, and as soon as he knew the letters began at the first chapter of Genesis. He was taught to spell the first verse, then to read it over and over, till he could read it off hand without any hesitation; so on to the second, &c. till he took ten verses for a lesson, which he quickly did. Easter fell low that year, and by Whitsuntide he could read a chapter very well; for he read continually, and had such a prodigious memory, that I cannot remember ever to have told him the same word twice. What was yet stranger, any word he had learnt in his lesson, he knew wherever he saw it, either in his Bible or any other book, by which means he learnt very soon to read an English author well.

"The same method was observed with them all. As soon as they knew the letters they were first put to spell, and read one line, then a verse, never leaving till perfect in their lesson, were it shorter or longer. So one or other continued reading at school time without any intermission; and before we left school, each child read what he had learnt that morning; and ere we parted in the afternoon, what they had learned that day."

Mr. Wesley observes of his mother, that even she, as well as her father and grandfather, her husband and three sons, had been in her measure, a preacher of righteousness. As this is a remarkable circumstance in her life, and shows her zeal and steadiness in doing good, I shall relate it a little more at large than Mr. Wesley has done, as the original letters are before me.

Her husband usually attended the sittings of convocation; and on these occasions was obliged to reside in London for a length of time that was often injurious to his parish; and at an expense that was inconvenient to himself and family. It was on this business, I apprehend, that he spent so much time in London in the beginning of the year 1712. During his absence, Mrs. Wesley formed a little meeting at her house on a Sunday evening, when she read a sermon, prayed and conversed with the people who came for this purpose. She acquainted her husband of their meeting, who, on account of the newness and singularity of the thing, made some objections against it. Her answer is dated the 6th of February, 1712, in which she says, "I heartily thank you for dealing so plainly and faithfully with me in a matter of no common concern. The main of your objections against our Sunday evening meetings, are, first, that it will look particular; secondly, my sex; and, lastly, your being at present in a public station and character; to all which I shall answer briefly.

"As to its looking particular, I grant it does, and so does almost every thing that is serious, or that may any way advance the glory of God or the salvation of souls, if it be performed out of the pulpit or in the way of common conversation: because, in our corrupt age, the utmost care and diligence has been used to banish all discourse of God or spiritual concerns out of society; as if religion were never to appear out of the closet, and we were to be ashamed of nothing so much as of professing ourselves to be Christians.

"To your second, I reply, that, as I am a woman, so I am also mistress of a large family. And though the superior charge of the souls contained in it lies upon you, as the head of the family, and as their minister, yet in your absence I cannot but look upon every soul you leave under my care, as a talent committed to me under a trust by the great Lord of all the families of heaven and earth; and if I am unfaithful to him or to you, in neglecting to improve these talents, how shall I answer unto him, when he shall command me to render an account of my stewardship?

"As these and other such like thoughts, made me at first take a more than ordinary care of the souls of my children and servants; so, knowing that our most holy religion requires a strict observation of the Lord's day, and not thinking that we fully answered the end of the institution by only going to church; but that likewise we were obliged to fill up the intermediate spaces of that sacred time by other acts of piety and devotion; I thought it my duty to spend some part of the day in reading to, and instructing my family; especially in your absence, when, having no afternoon service, we have so much leisure for such exercises; and such time I esteemed spent in a way more acceptable to God than if I had retired to my own private devotions.

"This was the beginning of my present practice: other people's coming in and joining with us was purely accidental. Our lad told

his parents; they first desired to be admitted; then others who heard of it begged leave also; so our company increased to about thirty, and seldom exceeded forty last winter; and why it increased since, I leave you to judge after you have read what follows.

"Soon after you went to London, Emily found in your study the account of the Danish Missionaries; which, having never seen, I ordered her to read to me. I was never, I think, more affected with any thing than with the relation of their travels; and was exceedingly pleased with the noble design they were engaged in. Their labors refreshed my soul beyond measure, and I could not forbear spending a good part of that evening in praising and adoring the Divine goodness for inspiring those good men with such an ardent zeal for his glory; that they were willing to hazard their lives and all that is esteemed dear to men in this world, to advance the honor of their Master Jesus! For several days I could think or speak of little else. At last it came into my mind; though I am not a man, nor a minister of the gospel, and so cannot be engaged in such a worthy employment as they were; yet, if my heart were sincerely devoted to God, and if I were inspired with a true zeal for his glory, and did really desire the salvation of souls, I might do somewhat more than I do. I thought I might live in a more exemplary manner in some things; I might pray more for the people, and speak with more warmth to those with whom I have an opportunity of conversing. However, I resolved to begin with my own children; and accordingly I proposed and observed the following method. I take such a proportion of time as I can best spare every night, to discourse with each child by itself, on something that relates to its principal concerns. On Monday I talk with Molly; on Tuesday with Hetty; Wednesday with Nancy; Thursday with Jacky; Friday with Patty; Saturday with Charles; and with Emily and Suky together on Sunday.

"With those few neighbors who then came to me, I discoursed more freely and affectionately than before; I chose the best and most awakening sermons we had, and I spent more time with them in such exercises. Since this our company has increased every night; for I dare deny none who ask admittance. Last Sunday I believe we had above 200, and yet many went away for want of room.

"But I never durst positively presume to hope that God would make use of me as an instrument in doing good; the farthest I ever durst go was, it may be, who can tell? With God all things are possible. I will resign myself to him: Or, as Herbert better expresses it,

> "Only, since God doth often make
> Of lowly matter, for high uses meet,
> I throw me at his feet;
> There will I lie, until my Maker seek
> For some mean stuff, whereon to show his skill,
> Then is my time——"

And thus I rested, without passing any reflection on myself, or forming any judgment about the success or event of this undertaking.

"Your third objection I leave to be answered by your own judgment. We meet not upon any worldly design. We banish all temporal concerns from our society; none is suffered to mingle any discourse about them with our reading or singing. We keep close to the business of the day, and as soon as it is over they all go home. And where is the harm of this? If I and my children went a visiting on Sunday nights, or if we admitted of impertinent visits, as too many do who think themselves good Christians, perhaps it would be thought no scandalous practice, though in truth it would be so; therefore, why any should reflect upon you, let your station be what it will, because your wife endeavors to draw people to church, and to restrain them, by reading and other persuasions, from their profanation of God's most holy day, I cannot conceive. But if any should be so mad as to do it, I wish you would not regard it. For my part, I value no censure on this account; I have long since shook hands with the world, and I heartily wish I had never given them more reason to speak against me.

"As for your proposal of letting some other person read, alas! you do not consider what a people these are. I do not think one man among them could read a sermon without spelling a good part of it; and how would that edify the rest? Nor has any of our family a voice strong enough to be heard by such a number of people.

"But there is one thing about which I am much dissatisfied; that is, their being present at family prayers. I do not speak of any concern I am under barely because so many are present. For those who have the honor of speaking to the great and holy God, need not be ashamed to speak before the whole world, but because of my sex. I doubt if it be proper for me to present the prayers of the people to God. Last Sunday I would fain have dismissed them before prayers; but they begged so earnestly to stay, I durst not deny them."

In this, as in every other part of her conduct, Mrs. Wesley acted upon principle, and from mature deliberation. No person, perhaps, ever had a greater regard for the established order of the church of England, than she had; but she considered her conduct in this instance as coinciding with the spirit and intention of that order; to reform the manners of the people, and to beget in them a reverence for the public worship. It is obvious that this consideration alone silenced every objection in her mind, concerning her present proceedings. But, though she was satisfied of the propriety of her own conduct, she thought it her duty to abide by the decision of her husband. He had already written to her on the subject, and though he made some objections, yet upon the whole he seemed to approve of the meeting. But Inman the Curate, and two or three of his companions highly disapproved of it, and wrote to Mr. Wesley, complaining heavily of it, calling

it a conventicle, &c. It is always painful to see a clergyman among the foremost to oppose every thing that may tend to diffuse knowledge among the common people, and impress their minds with a serious sense of religion, and the duties it enjoins. This was evidently the case in the present instance; and the representations made to Mr. Wesley had such an effect upon his mind, that he wrote to his wife in a tone of disapprobation which he had not used before. Her answer, which is dated 25th of February, is worthy of herself, and of the cause in which she was engaged. "Some few days since," says she, "I received a letter from you, I suppose dated the 16th instant, which I made no great haste to answer; because I judged it necessary for both of us to take some time to consider, before you determine in a matter of such great importance. I shall not enquire how it was possible that you should be prevailed on, by the senseless clamors of two or three of the worst of your parish, to condemn what you so very lately approved; but I shall tell you my thoughts, in as few words as possible. I do not hear of more than three or four persons who are against our meeting, of whom Inman is the chief. He and Whitely, I believe, may call it a conventicle; but we hear no outcry here, nor has any one said a word against it to me. And what does their calling it a conventicle signify? does it alter the nature of the thing? or do you think that what they say is a sufficient reason to forbear a thing that has already done much good, and by the blessing of God may do much more? If its being called a conventicle by those who know in their conscience they misrepresent it, did really make it one, what you say would be somewhat to the purpose: but it is plain in fact, that this one thing has brought more people to church than ever any thing did in so short a time. We used not to have above twenty or twenty-five at evening service, whereas now we have between two and three hundred; which are more than ever came before to hear Inman in the morning.

"Besides the constant attendance on the public worship of God, our meeting has wonderfully conciliated the minds of this people towards us, so that we now live in the greatest amity imaginable; and what is still better, they are very much reformed in their behavior on the Lord's day; and those who used to be playing in the streets, now come to hear a good sermon read, which is surely more acceptable to Almighty God.

"Another reason for what I do, is, that I have no other way of conversing with this people, and therefore have no other way of doing them good; but by this I have an opportunity of exercising the greatest and noblest charity, that is, charity to their souls.

"Some families who seldom went to church, now go constantly; and one person who has not been there for seven years, is now prevailed upon to go with the rest.

"There are many other good consequences of this meeting which I have not time to mention. Now I beseech you weigh all things in

an impartial balance: on the one side, the honor of Almighty God, the doing much good to many souls, and the friendship of the best among whom we live; on the other (if folly, impiety, and vanity may abide in the scale against so ponderous a weight) the senseless objections of a few scandalous persons, laughing at us, and censuring us as precise and hypocritical; and when you have duly considered all things, let me know your positive determination.

"I need not tell you the consequences, if you determine to put an end to our meeting. You may easily foresee what prejudices it may raise in the minds of these people against Inman especially, who has had so little wit as to speak publicly against it. I can now keep them to the church, but if it be laid aside, I doubt they will never go to hear him more, at least those who come from the lower end of the town; but if this be continued till you return, which now will not be long, it may please God that their hearts may be so changed by that time, that they may love and delight in his public worship so as never to neglect it more.

"If you do, after all, think fit to dissolve this assembly, do not tell me that you desire me to do it, for that will not satisfy my conscience: but send me your positive command, in such full and express terms, as may absolve me from all guilt and punishment for neglecting this opportunity of doing good, when you and I shall appear before the great and awful tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The meeting, I believe, was continued until Mr. Wesley returned to Epworth.

Mrs. Wesley continued to discharge the duties of a wife and parent with the greatest diligence and punctuality. The letters she wrote to her sons, when at Oxford, and after they had left it, show her in the most amiable light, both for knowledge and piety. In 1735 she lost her husband, and afterwards divided her time between her children, till about the year 1739; after which, I believe, she resided chiefly in London.

It appears from all we have seen of Mrs. Wesley, that she was a woman of real experience in the things of God. But it does not appear that she had a clear notion of justification as distinct from sanctification; on the contrary, she seems to have confounded them together. The consequence was, that her knowledge of the doctrine of justification by faith alone, without the deeds of the law, was not so clear as it might have been; and this hindered her from enjoying that full assurance of her state, and the peace and joy consequent upon it, which otherwise she would have had. When her two sons, Mr. John and Charles Wesley, began to preach the doctrine of justification by faith in 1738, and many professed to be so justified, and to know the time when this change in their state took place, she mentions their notions as new, in a letter she wrote to her son Samuel in

November this year;* though it must be acknowledged that she had not then conversed with them on the subject, and therefore did not know what doctrines they taught, except by report. It has indeed been said that she "lived long enough to deplore the extravagance of her sons;" and this assertion was founded on the letter above mentioned. But what she says on this subject has only a reference to dreams, visions, or some extraordinary revelation, which some persons pretended to have had, and in which they had received the knowledge of their justification, at least this was reported of several; but she no where charges her sons with teaching this as the way of justification. But the author of the assertion above mentioned has made several assertions concerning some of this family, which have not the least foundation in any fact, and could have originated no where but in his own mistaken fancy; so little credit is generally due to an author, even of character and ability, when he speaks of religious persons, against whom he has imbibed some prejudice.

The following extracts from three of her letters to Mr. Charles Wesley,† will show us her opinion of the doctrine and conduct of her sons, more clearly than any thing which has yet appeared in print.

"*October* 19, 1738.

"It is with much pleasure I find your mind is somewhat easier than formerly, and I heartily thank God for it. The spirit of man may sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear. If this hath been your case, it has been sad indeed. But blessed be God who gave you convictions of the evil of sin, as contrary to the purity of the divine nature, and the perfect goodness of his law. Blessed be God who showed you the necessity you were in of a Saviour to deliver you from the power of sin and Satan (for Christ will be no Saviour to such as see not their need of one) and directed you by faith to lay hold of that stupendous mercy offered us by redeeming love! JESUS is the only physician of souls; his blood the only salve which can heal a wounded conscience. It is not in wealth, or honor, or sensual pleasures, to relieve a spirit heavy laden and weary of the burden of sin; these things have power to increase our guilt, by alienating our hearts from God, but none to make our peace with him; to reconcile God to man, and man to God, and to renew the union between the divine and human nature. No, there is none but CHRIST, none but CHRIST, who is sufficient for these things—But blessed be God, he is an all-sufficient Saviour! and blessed be his holy name, that thou hast found him a Saviour to thee, my son—O! let us love him much, for we have much to be forgiven.

"I would gladly know what your notion is of justifying faith; because you speak of it as a thing you have but lately obtained."

* Printed in Dr. Priestley's collection.

† For these letters, and some other papers of importance in this work, I am under great obligations to the Rev. Mr. L——y.

The second letter is dated December 6th, 1738. In it she says, "I think you are fallen into an odd way of thinking. You say, that, till within a few months, you had no spiritual life, nor any justifying faith. Now this is, as if a man should affirm he was not alive in his infancy, because when an infant he did not know he was alive. All then that I can gather from your letter is, that till a little while ago you were not so well satisfied of your being a Christian as you are now. I heartily rejoice that you have now attained to a strong and lively hope in God's mercy through Christ. Not that I can think you were totally without saving faith before; but it is one thing to have faith, and another thing to be sensible we have it. Faith is the fruit of the spirit, and is the gift of God; but to feel, or be inwardly sensible that we have true faith, requires a further operation of God's Holy Spirit. You say you have peace, but not joy, in believing; blessed be God for peace; may this peace rest with you. Joy will follow, perhaps not very closely, but it will follow faith and love. God's promises are sealed to us, but not dated. Therefore patiently attend his pleasure; he will give you joy in believing. Amen."

From these letters we see, that Mrs. Wesley was so far from "deploring the extravagance of her sons," that she rejoiced in their christian experience, and praised God for it. She thought them mistaken in judging of their former state, but not in their notions of justifying faith itself; for she says in the letter last mentioned, "my notion of justifying faith is the same with yours; for that trusting in Jesus Christ, or the promises made in him, is that special act of faith to which our justification or acceptance is so frequently ascribed in the gospel. This faith is certainly the gift of God, wrought in the mind of man by His Holy Spirit." The two Mr. Wesleys professed to know the time when they received justifying faith, and they taught that others might know the time of their justification: on this head she observes, "I do not judge it necessary for us to know the precise time of our conversion;" from which it appears that she did not think this part of their doctrine erroneous or extravagant; she was only afraid lest this circumstance should be made a necessary criterion of conversion which she thought might hurt the minds of weaker Christians. These letters, therefore, are a full confutation of Mr. Badcock's assertion.

The third letter is dated December 27th, 1739, after she had come to reside chiefly in London. Here she enjoyed the conversation of her sons alternately, the one being always in town while the other was in the country. She now attended on their ministry, conversed with the people of the society, and became more perfectly acquainted with their whole doctrine, and seems heartily to have embraced it. Charles was in Bristol when she wrote this letter to him. She observes, "You cannot more desire to see me, than I do to see you. Your brother, whom I shall henceforward call son Wesley, since my

dear Samuel is gone home—has just been with me, and much revived my spirits. Indeed I have often found that he never speaks in my hearing without my receiving some spiritual benefit. But his visits are seldom and short; for which I never blame him, because I know he is well employed; and blessed be God, hath great success in his ministry.

"But my dear Charles, still I want either him or you. For indeed, in the most literal sense, I am become a little child, and want continual succor. 'As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend.' I feel much comfort and support from religious conversation when I can obtain it. Formerly I rejoiced in the absence of company, and found, the less I had of creature comforts, the more I had from God. But alas! I am fallen from that spiritual converse I once enjoyed; and why is it so? because I want faith. God is an omnipresent unchangeable good, 'in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.' The fault is in myself; and I attribute all mistakes in judgment, all errors in practice, to want of faith in the blessed Jesus. O! my dear, when I consider the dignity of his person, the perfection of his purity, the greatness of his sufferings; but above all, his boundless love, I am astonished and utterly confounded: I am lost in thought; I fall into nothing before him! O how inexcusable is that person who has knowledge of these things, and yet remains poor and low in faith and love. I speak as one guilty in this matter.

"I have been prevented from finishing my letter. I complained I had none to converse with me on spiritual things; but for these several days I have had the conversation of many good Christians, who have refreshed in some measure my fainting spirits. And though they hindered my writing, yet it was a pleasing, and I hope not an unprofitable interruption they gave me. I hope we shall shortly speak face to face, and I shall then, if God permit, impart my thoughts more fully. But then, alas! when you come, your brother leaves me—yet that is the will of God, in whose blessed service you are engaged; who hath hitherto blessed your labors, and preserved your persons. That he may continue so to prosper your work, and protect you both from evil, and give you strength and courage to preach the true gospel, in opposition to the united powers of evil men and evil angels, is the hearty prayer of, dear Charles, your loving mother,

"S. W."

This letter gives full evidence that Mrs. Wesley cordially approved of the conduct of her sons, and was animated with zeal for the success of their labors. She continued in the most perfect harmony with them till her death; attending on their ministry, and walking in the light of God's countenance, she rejoiced in the happy experience of the truths she heard them preach. In the first attempts of a Layman

to preach, it is said she heard his discourses. Mr. John Wesley was at this time absent from London; but the thing being quite new, and appearing extraordinary, he was immediately acquainted with it. He hasted up to London, with a full determination to put a stop to so glaring an irregularity. He conversed with his mother on the subject, and told her his intention. She said, "I charge you before God, take care what you do, for that man is as much called to preach the gospel as ever you were." This kept him from a hasty execution of his purpose; and it being found upon enquiry that good was done to the people, the practice was suffered to continue.

Mr. Wesley gives the following account of his mother's death:* "I left Bristol in the evening of Sunday the 18th (July, 1742), and on Tuesday came to London. I found my mother on the borders of eternity. But she had no doubt or fear; nor any desire, but as soon as God should call, to depart and be with Christ.

"Friday the 23d, about three in the afternoon, I went to my mother, and found her change was near. She was in her last conflict; unable to speak, but I believe quite sensible. Her look was calm and serene, and her eyes fixed upward, while we commended her soul to God. From three to four the silver cord was loosing, and the wheel breaking at the cistern: and then, without any struggle or sigh or groan, the soul was set at liberty! We stood round the bed, and fulfilled her last request, uttered a little before she lost her speech; 'Children, as soon as I am released, sing a psalm of praise to God.'

"Sunday, August 1st. Almost an innumerable company of people being gathered together, about five in the afternoon, I committed to the earth the body of my mother, to sleep with her fathers. The portion of scripture from which I afterwards spoke, was, 'I saw a great white throne and him that sat on it; from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and the books were opened—and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.' It was one of the most solemn assemblies I ever saw, or expect to see, on this side eternity.

"We set up a plain stone at the head of her grave, inscribed with the following words:

"Here lies the body of Mrs. Susannah Wesley, the youngest and last surviving daughter of Dr. Samuel Annesley.

"In sure and steadfast hope to rise,
And claim her mansion in the skies,
A Christian here her flesh laid down,
The cross exchanging for a crown," &c.

* Wesley's Works, vol. xxviii, p. 83. N. B. The date in the printed journal is erroneous.

Mrs. Wesley had taken great pains with all her children, to furnish their minds with useful knowledge, and to instil into them the principles of religion and virtue. The daughters were by no means neglected, they shared their mother's care with the sons. I have many of their letters by me, in which there is much strong sense, clean wit, and accurate language; though they were written on trifling subjects, and without any expectation that they would be preserved. Most of them had a fine genius for poetry; but Mrs. Wright shone the brightest in this walk of elegant amusement, and to her I shall chiefly confine my observations in speaking of the daughters of these venerable parents.

Mrs. Wright was her mother's tenth or eleventh child; and it has been said, that when she was eight years old, she could read the Greek Testament. From her infancy she was gay and sprightly; and extremely addicted to wit and humor. As she grew up, she indulged herself in these dispositions so far, as to give great uneasiness to her parents, and was often betrayed into little inadvertences, which contributed, at least, to her future unhappiness in life. About the year 1724, or the beginning of 1725, a gentleman, respectable, so far as I can find, both for his abilities and situation in life, paid his addresses to her, and she had a sincere regard for him. But, from some circumstance or other, he and her father disagreed, and the affair was broken off. From a concurrence of circumstances in the end of the year 1725, she was induced to marry a person no way adapted to make her happy; being low and rude in address, and much inferior to her in understanding; and he proved unkind to her. Her situation preyed upon her mind, her health and strength gradually wasted away, and at length she sunk into a degree of melancholy that made her truly wretched. Most of her verses which have been preserved, though beautiful, and written in the true spirit of poetry, are saddened with an air of deep distress, which strongly marks this state of body and mind. The following address to her husband will give us some notion of his character, and show us the true cause of her wretchedness.

MRS. MEHETABEL WRIGHT TO HER HUSBAND.

The ardent lover cannot find
A coldness in his fair unkind,
But blaming what he cannot hate
He mildly chides the dear ingrate;
And though despairing of relief,
In soft complaining vents his grief.

Then what should hinder but that I,
Impatient of my wrongs, may try,
By saddest, softest strains, to move
My wedded, latest, dearest love?

To throw his cold neglect aside
And cheer once more his injur'd bride.

O! thou whom sacred rites design'd,
My guide and husband ever kind;
My sov'reign master, best of friends,
On whom my earthly bliss depends;
If e'er thou didst in Hetty see
Aught fair, or good, or dear to thee;
If gentle speech can ever move
The cold remains of former love,
Turn thee at last—my bosom ease,
Or tell me why I cease to please.

Is it because revolving years,
Heart-breaking sighs, and fruitless tears,
Have quite depriv'd this form of mine
Of all that once thou fanci'dst fine?
Ah no! what once allur'd thy sight,
Is still in its meridian height:
These eyes their usual lustre show,
When un-eclips'd by flowing woe.
Old age and wrinkles in this face
As yet could never find a place;
A youthful grace adorns the lines,
Where still the purple current shines;
Unless by thy ungentle art,
It flies to aid my wretched heart:
Nor does this slighted bosom show
The thousand hours it spends in woe.

Or is it that oppress'd with care
I stun with loud complaints thine ear.
And make thy home, for quiet meant,
The seat of noise and discontent?
Oh no! those ears were ever free
From matrimonial melody,
For though thine absence I lament,
When half the lonely night is spent;
Yet when the watch or early morn,
Has brought me hopes of thy return,
I oft have wip'd these watchful eyes,
Conceal'd my cares, and curb'd my sighs,
In spite of grief, to let thee see
I wore an endless smile for thee.

Had I not practis'd ev'ry art
T' oblige, divert, and cheer thy heart,
To make me pleasing in thine eyes,
And turn thy home to paradise,
I had not ask'd, why dost thou shun
These faithful arms, and eager run
To some obscure, unclean retreat,
With fiends incarnate glad to meet,
The vile companions of thy mirth,
The scum and refuse of the earth?
Who when inspir'd with beer can grin
At witless oaths, and jests obscene;

Till the most learned of the throng
Begin a tale of ten hours long,
Whilst thou in raptures, with stretch'd jaws,
Crownest each joke with loud applause.

Depriv'd of freedom, health, and ease,
And rival'd by such things as these,
This latest effort will I try,
Or to regain thine heart, or die:
Soft as I am, I 'll make thee see,
I will not brook contempt from thee.
Then quit the shuffling doubtful sense,
Nor hold me longer in suspense.
Unkind, ungrateful as thou art,
Say, must I ne'er regain thy heart?
Must all attempts to please thee prove
Unable to regain thy love?
If so, by truth itself I swear,
The sad reverse I cannot bear;
No rest, no pleasure will I see,
My whole of bliss is lost with thee.
I 'll give all thought of patience o'er,
(A gift I never lost before)
Indulge at once my rage and grief,
Mourn obstinate, disdain relief;
And call that wretch my mortal foe,
Who tries to mitigate my woe;
Till life, on terms severe as these,
Shall ebbing leave my heart at ease;
To thee thy liberty restore,
To laugh when Hetty is no more.

The following beautiful lines seem to have been a mere extempore effusion poured out from the fulness of her heart on the occasion, and sharpened with the keen distress of her hopeless situation.

HER ADDRESS TO HER DYING INFANT,* SEPTEMBER, 1728.

Tender softness! infant mild!
Perfect, sweetest, loveliest child!
Transient lustre! beauteous clay!
Smiling wonder of a day!
Ere the last convulsive start
Rend thy unresisting heart,
Ere the long enduring swoon
Weigh thy precious eye-lids down;
Ah, regard a mother's moan;
Anguish deeper than thy own.

Fairest eyes, whose dawning light
Late with rapture bless'd my sight;
Ere your orbs extinguish'd be,
Bend their trembling beams on me!
Drooping sweetness! verdant flower!
Blooming, with'ring in an hour!

* The child died the third day after it was born. Private papers

Ere thy gentle breast sustains
Latest, fiercest, mortal pains,
Hear a suppliant! let me be
Partner in thy destiny!

That whene'er the fatal cloud
Must thy radiant temples shroud;
When deadly damps (impending now)
Shall hover round thy destin'd brow;
Diffusive may their influence be,
And with the blossom blast the tree!

In this state of mind, and declining fast in health, she wrote the following Epitaph for herself:

"Destin'd while living, to sustain
An equal share of grief and pain!
All various ills of human race
Within this breast had once a place.
Without complaint she learn'd to bear
A living death, a long despair;
Till hard oppress'd by adverse fate
O'ercharg'd, she sunk beneath the weight,
And to this peaceful tomb retir'd,
So much esteem'd, so long desir'd!
The painful, mortal conflict 's o'er:
A broken heart can bleed no more."

Mrs. Wright however lived many years after this; and at length religion coming to her aid, it soothed the anguish of her mind, and gave her peace, though she never recovered her health.

The first religious letter she wrote to Mr. Wesley was in 1743; she says, "Some years ago I told my brother Charles, I could not be of his way of thinking then, but that if ever I was, I would as freely own it. After I was convinced of sin—and of your opinion as far as I had examined your principles, I still forbore declaring my sentiments so openly as I had inclination to do, fearing I should relapse into my former state. When I was delivered from this fear, and had a blessed hope, that he who had begun, would finish his work, I never confessed, so fully as I ought, how entirely I was of your mind; because I was taxed with insincerity and hypocrisy whenever I opened my mouth in favor of religion, or owned how great things God had done for me. This discouraged me utterly, and prevented me from making my change as public as my folly and vanity had formerly been. But now my health is gone, I cannot be easy without declaring that I have long desired to know but one thing; that is Jesus Christ and him crucified; and this desire prevails above all others. And though I am cut off from all human help or ministry, I am not without assistance; though I have no spiritual friend, nor ever had one yet, except perhaps once in a year or two, when I have seen one of my brothers, or some other religious person, by stealth:

yet (no thanks to me) I am enabled to seek him still, and to be satisfied with nothing less than God, in whose presence I affirm this truth. I dare not desire health, only patience, resignation, and the spirit of an healthful mind—I have been so long weak, that I know not how long my trial may last; but I have a firm persuasion and blessed hope (though no full assurance) that in the country I am going to, I shall not sing hallelujah, and holy, holy, holy, without company, as I have done in this. Dear brother, I am unused to speak or write on these things—I only speak my plain thoughts as they occur. Adieu. If you have time from better business, to send a line to Stanmore, so great a comfort would be as welcome as it is wanted."

In July, 1744, she wrote to her brother from Bristol, where it seems she then resided, at least for some time. She speaks of herself in the most humiliating terms. She highly commends the christian friendship of Mrs. Vigor, Miss Stafford, and some others. She now enjoyed the means of grace, and the benefit of conversation with the people of the society, and continued to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Mrs. Wright persevered in a religious course of life, patient in her sufferings, resigned to her weakness, and waiting for full salvation in a deliverance from this mortal state, till 1751. In March this year, Mr. Charles Wesley speaks thus of her—"Prayed by my sister Wright, a gracious, tender, trembling soul; a bruised reed, which the Lord will not break." She died on the 21st of the same month, and Mr. Charles preached her funeral sermon. He observes that he had sweet fellowship with her in explaining those words, "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." He adds, "All present seemed partakers both of my sorrow and my joy."

From this authentic account of Mrs. Wright, taken from original letters, we may correct an error of Mr. Duncombe concerning her. This gentleman has insinuated in his *Feminead*, that her pungent distress and gloomy despair, originated from mistaken and superstitious views of religion: it appears, on the contrary, that they arose from a very different cause, and that religion was the thing that restored her to peace and happiness; and indeed the only thing that could do it. Mr. Duncombe's words are,

"But ah! why heaves my breast this pensive sigh?
Why starts this tear unbidden from my eye?
What breast from sighs, what eye from tears refrains,
When sweetly, mournful hapless Wright complains?
And who but grieves to see her gen'rous mind,
For nobler views, and worthier guests design'd,
Amidst the hateful form of black despair,
Wan with the gloom of superstitious care?

In pity-moving lays, with earnest cries,
She call'd on heaven to close her weary eyes,
And long on earth by heart-felt woes opprest,
Was borne by friendly death to welcome rest!"*

It is grievous to see authors, whose works are likely to be read, take every opportunity to dress out religion in the most ugly forms they can invent, to deter young people from embracing it, and attributing to it the calamities of life which religion alone is able to alleviate and redress.

The following among other poetical compositions, were written by Mrs. Wright; but at what period of her life I do not know.

TO THE MEMORY OF HER UNCLE. A PHYSICIAN.† HE DIED IN 1737.‡

How can the muse attempt the string,
  Forsaken by her guardian power:
Ah me! that she survives to sing,
  Her friend and patron, now no more!
Yet private grief she might suppress,
  Since Clio bears no selfish mind;
But oh! she mourns to wild excess
  The friend and patron of mankind.

Alas! the sovereign healing art,
  Which rescu'd thousands from the grave,
Unaided left the gentlest heart,
  Nor could its skilful master save.
Who shall the helpless sex sustain,
  Now Varo's lenient hand is gone?
Which knew so well to soften pain,
  And ward all dangers but his own.

His darling muse, his Clio dear,
  Whom first his favor rais'd to fame,
His gentle voice vouchsaf'd to cheer;
  His art upheld her tender frame.
Pale envy durst not show her teeth,
  Above contempt she gaily shone
Chief favorite; till the hand of death
  Endanger'd both by striking one.

Perceiving well, devoid of fear,
  His latest fatal conflict nigh,
Reclin'd on her he held most dear,
  Whose breast receiv'd his parting sigh;
With every art and grace adorn'd,
  By man admir'd, by heaven approv'd,
Good Varo died—applauded, mourn'd,
  And honor'd by the muse he lov'd.

* See Christian Magazine, vol. iii. p. 523.

† Christian Magazine, vol. iii. p. 284. See above, page 25.

‡ Mr. Charles Wesley's Journal.

TO THE MEMORY OF HER SISTER.

If happy spirits are allowed to know,
And hover round what once they lov'd below,
Maria, gentlest excellence, attend,
To one who glories to have call'd thee friend!
Remote in merit, though allied in blood,
Though worthless I, and thou divinely good;
Accept, dear shade, from me these artless lays,
Who never durst unjustly blame or praise.

With business and devotion never cloy'd,
No moment of thy life pass'd unemploy'd:
Well-natur'd mirth, matur'd discretion join'd,
Constant attendants on the virtuous mind:
Ah me! that heav'n has from this bosom torn
The dearest friend whom I must ever mourn,
Ere Stella could discharge the smallest part
Of what she ow'd to such immense desert.

Pleasing thy face and form, though heav'n confin'd
To scanty limits thy extensive mind:
Witness the taintless lustre of thy skin,
Bright emblem of the brighter soul within;
That soul which easy, unaffected, mild,
Through jetty eyes with pleasing sweetness smil'd.

To soundest prudence, life's unerring guide,
To love sincere, religion void of pride;
To friendship, perfect in a female mind,
Which I can never hope again to find:
To mirth, the balm of care, from lightness free,
To steadfast truth, unwearied industry,
To every charm and grace, compris'd in you,
Sister and friend, a long and last adieu!

A FAREWELL TO THE WORLD.

While sickness rends this tenement of clay,
Th' approaching change with pleasure I survey,
O'erjoyed to reach the goal with eager pace,
Ere my slow life has measur'd half its race.
No longer shall I bear, my friends to please,
The hard constraint of seeming much at ease,
Wearing an outward smile, a look serene,
While piercing racks and tortures lurk within.
Yet let me not, ungrateful to my God,
Record the evil, and forget the good.
For both I humble adoration pay,
And bless the power who gives and takes away:
Long shall my faithful memory retain,
And oft recall each interval of pain.
Nay to high heav'n for greater gifts I bend,
Health I 've enjoyed, and I had once a friend
Our labor sweet, if labor it may seem,
Allow'd the sportive and instructive scene:

Yet here no lewd or useless wit was found,
We pois'd the wav'ring sail with ballast sound.
Learning here plac'd her richer stores in view,
Or, wing'd with love, the minutes gaily flew.

Nay, yet sublimer joys our bosoms prov'd,
Divine benevolence, by heav'n belov'd:
Wan meagre forms, torn from impending death,
Exulting, bless'd us with reviving breath.
The shiv'ring wretch we cloth'd, the mourner cheer'd,
And sickness ceas'd to groan when we appear'd.
Unask'd, our care assists with tender art
Their bodies, nor neglects th' immortal part.

Sometimes, in shades impierc'd by Cynthia's beam,
Whose lustre glimmer'd on the dimpled stream;
We led the sprightly dance through sylvan scenes,
Or tripp'd like fairies o'er the level greens;
In ev'ry breast a gen'rous fervor glows,
Soft bliss, which innocence alone bestows!
From fragrant herbage, deck'd with pearly dews,
And flow'rets of a thousand various hues,
By wafting gales the mingling odors fly,
And round our heads in whisp'ring breezes sigh.
Whole nature seems to heighten and improve
The holier hours of innocence and love.
Youth, wit, good nature, candor, sense, combin'd,
To serve, delight, and civilize mankind;
In wisdom's lore we ev'ry heart engage,
And triumph to restore the golden age!

Now close the blissful scene, exhausted muse,
The latest blissful scene which thou shalt choose;
Satiate with life, what joys for me remain,
Save one dear wish, to balance ev'ry pain;
To bow my head, with grief and toil opprest,
Till borne by angel-bands to everlasting rest.

Miss Kezzy Wesley was addressed by Mr. Hall, a young gentleman of a good understanding, agreeable in his person, and engaging in his address. He was entered at Lincoln College as Mr. Wesley's pupil, on the 22d of January, 1731; but Mr. Wesley was totally ignorant of the matter when he first paid his addresses to his sister.* Mr. Hall, I think, entered into orders while he was at Oxford; and though most of the family thought highly of him in every respect as a religious character, yet Samuel Wesley strongly doubted his sincerity. Mr. John Wesley believed him sincere and pious, but in a letter written to his mother, when Mr. Hall was at Oxford, he speaks of him as highly enthusiastic and superstitious. After he had gained the affections of the young lady he quitted her, and paid his addresses to her elder sister. The family opposed this conduct with

* This appears from a letter Mr. Wesley wrote to Mr. Hall, in which he mentions this circumstance.

great vehemence, especially the three brothers. But the marriage, notwithstanding, took place, and the future conduct of Mr. Hall by no means corresponded to the expectations they at first formed of him. After some years he quitted his wife, and afterwards lived in the most loose and scandalous manner. Mrs. Hall bore her trials with remarkable patience and resignation. Indeed in this respect she was a pattern to all Christians; for I do not remember, that I ever heard her speak ill of any person, whatever injuries she might have received.—Miss Kezzy Wesley died on the 9th of March, 1741, and Mr. Charles gives the following account of her death in a letter to his brother.

"Yesterday morning sister Kezzy died in the Lord Jesus. He finished his work, and cut it short in mercy—full of thankfulness, resignation and love, without pain or trouble, she commended her spirit into the hands of Jesus, and fell asleep." Mrs. Hall survived all her brothers and sisters, and died in peace, July 12th, 1791.

CHAPTER V.

Of the Rev. Samuel Wesley Junior.

Samuel Wesley, M. A., son of Samuel and Susannah Wesley, was born about 1692,* a year or two before his parents removed to Epworth; being nearly eleven years older than his brother Mr. John Wesley, and sixteen older than Mr. Charles. He was sent to Westminster School about the beginning of the year 1704, and admitted a King's Scholar in 1707.† Before he left home, his mother, by judicious and constant instruction, had formed his mind to a knowledge and serious sense of religion; but she knew the danger of his situation at Westminster, and how exceedingly apt young persons are to be drawn aside from religion and virtue, by improper companions, and bad examples constantly before their eyes. On this account she was anxious for the preservation of his morals, as he grew up and became more exposed to the temptations of evil. After she had recovered from the shock of the fire which destroyed all they had, and from the fury of which they saved themselves with great difficulty, she wrote to him a long letter, dated October, 1709; which, for the importance of the matter, and the energy with which it is written, is highly deserving of preservation; but on account of its length I can insert only a part of it. This part of it, however, will bring forward to the view of parents an

* This date of his birth is taken from a memorandum, which Mr. John Wesley wrote on the back of one of his brother's letters.

† Welch's List of Scholars of St. Peter's College, Westminster, as they were elected to Christ Church, Oxford, and to Trinity College, Cambridge, p. 91.

example of attention to the best interest of a child, which it will be their happiness and glory to follow.

"I hope," says she, "that you retain the impressions of your education, nor have forgot that the vows of God are upon you. You know that the first fruits are heaven's by an unalienable right; and that, as your parents devoted you to the service of the altar, so you yourself made it your choice when your father was offered another way of life for you. But have you duly considered what such a choice, and such a dedication imports? Consider well, what separation from the world! what purity! what devotion! what exemplary virtue! is required in those who are to guide others to glory. I say exemplary, for low, common degrees of piety are not sufficient for those of the sacred function. You must not think to live like the rest of the world: your light must so shine among men, that they may see your good works, and thereby be led to glorify your Father which is in heaven. For my part, I cannot see with what face clergymen can reprove sinners, or exhort men to lead a good life, when they themselves indulge their own corrupt inclinations, and by their practice contradict their doctrine. If the holy Jesus be in truth their Master, and they are really his ambassadors, surely it becomes them to live like his disciples; and if they do not, what a sad account must they give of their stewardship.

"I would advise you, as much as possible in your present circumstances, to throw your business into a certain method; by which means you will learn to improve every precious moment, and find an unspeakable facility in the performance of your respective duties. Begin and end the day with him who is the Alpha and Omega; and if you really experience what it is to love God, you will redeem all the time you can for his more immediate service. I will tell you what rule I used to observe when I was in my father's house, and had as little, if not less liberty than you have now: I used to allow myself as much time for recreation as I spent in private devotion; not that I always spent so much, but I gave myself leave to go so far, but no farther. So in all things else, appoint so much time for sleep, eating, company, &c. But above all things, my dear Sammy, I command, I beg, I beseech you, to be very strict in observing the Lord's day. In all things endeavor to act upon principle, and do not live like the rest of mankind, who pass through the world like straws upon a river which are carried which way the stream or wind drives them. Often put this question to yourself, Why do I this or that? Why do I pray, read, study, use devotion, &c.?—by which means you will come to such a steadiness and consistency in your words and actions, as becomes a reasonable creature and a good Christian."—These observations were worthy of the mother, and they were properly regarded and followed by the son.

When senior scholar at Westminster, the Bishop of Rochester* took him to his seat at Bromley, in Kent, to read to him in the evenings. He was at this time eagerly pursuing his studies, and this circumstance, which for several reasons would have been highly gratifying to many, was to him no small mortification. From this place he wrote a Latin letter to his father, in August, 1710, in which he complains heavily of the bishop for the interruption he gave him in his learning. An extract from this letter I shall insert below,† and give the general purport of it in English. Speaking of the bishop, he observes, "He will always be exceedingly troublesome to me both in sacred and profane learning; for he interrupts the studies to which I had applied with all my might. Last year, in the midst of our business in the college, he took me off both from study and from school, not only without any benefit, but without calling me to any thing which had even the appearance of either utility or pleasure. To-day he is from home, or I should scarcely have leisure to write this letter. He chose me from all the scholars, me, who am hoarse and short-sighted, to read to him at night. I am glad you enjoy good health. I beg yours and my mother's blessing. I saw my grandmother‡ in the last holidays; in those which are approaching I cannot, because I am detained by an *unfriendly* friend."

He was about eighteen years old when he wrote this letter, and not yet removed from school. We may observe in it marks of a strong mind, wholly devoted to the pursuit of classical knowledge; and considering his age and situation at the time, it shows a progress in learning which does him credit.

His mother's advices had a proper effect on his mind, and were the means of preserving him from vices too common to the youth of the place. He retained his sobriety, his reverence for God, and regard for religion. In December this year he wrote to his mother, and the following extract from his letter gives a pleasing view of his simplicity, and serious attention to the state of his own heart, and the first motions of evil. "I received the sacrament," says he, "the first Sunday of this month—I am unstable as water—I frequently make good resolutions and keep them for a time, and then grow weary of the restraint. I have one grand failing, which is, that having done

* The predecessor of Atterbury, who was not advanced to the see of Rochester till 1713.

† Speaking of the bishop, he says, "Ille mihi, et in sacris et in profanis rebus semper erit infestissimus; studia enim intermitti cogit, quibus pro virili incubueram. Ultimo anno in collegio agendo, ubi non mihi seniori opus est amicorum hospitio, a studiis et a schola me detraxit; non modo nullam ad utilitatem, sed ne ad minimam quidem vel utilitatis vel voluptatis speciem me vocavit. Ipse hodie foras est, aliter vix otium foret quo has scriberem. Me ex omnibus discipulis elegit, ut perlegerem ei noctu libros; me raucum, me μυωπα. Gaudeo vos valetudine bona frui. Tuam et maternam benedictionem oro—Episcopus jussit me illius in literis mentionem facere. Da veniam subitis—Aviam ultimis festis vidi; his venientibus non possum, quia ab inimico amico detineor."

‡ The widow of Mr. John Wesley, of New-Inn Hall, Oxford, and niece to Dr. Thomas Fuller. She had now been a widow near forty years.

my duty, I undervalue others, and think what wretches the rest of the college are compared with me. Sometimes in my relapses I cry out, 'Can the Æthiopian change his skin, and the leopard his spots, then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil:' but I answer again, 'With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.' Amen."

The next year, 1711, he was elected to Christ Church, Oxford;* and here, as well as at Westminster, he acquired the character of an excellent classic scholar. But his mind was too large, and his zeal for religion and the established church too ardent, to be confined within the bounds prescribed by the common exercises of the place.

The following letter shows that he took an active part in some of the principal questions agitated among the literati of that time. It is dated June 3, 1713, when he had been about two years at Oxford; and is addressed to the Honorable Robert Nelson, Esquire. He says, "I hoped long ere this to have perfected, as well I could, my dissertation on Ignatius, and gotten it ready for the press, when I came to town this year. But I found myself disappointed, at first, for some months, by my affairs in the East India House, and since by my charity hymns and other matters. I think I told you some time since that I had laid materials together for a second discourse on that subject, directly against Mr. Whiston's objections to the shorter and genuine copy of Ignatius; whereas my former was chiefly against the larger; because I then thought, if that were proved interpolated, it would be readily granted that the other was the genuine. But having found, when Mr. Whiston's four volumes came out, that he had in the first of them laid together many objections against the shorter epistles, I set myself to consider them; and having now got Archbishop Usher, Bishop Pearson, and Dr. Smyth, on that subject, and as carefully as I could perused them; I found that many of Mr. Whiston's objections were taken from Daille, a few from the writings of the Socinians and modern Arians, though most of them from his own observations. These latter being new, and having not appeared when Bishop Pearson or the others wrote, could not be taken notice of by them, and being now published in the English language, may seduce some well-meaning persons, and persuade them that the true Ignatius was of the same opinion with the Arians (whereas I am sure he was as far from it as light is from darkness) and that the rather because there has been as yet no answer, that I know of, published to them, though they were printed in the year 1711. I know many are of opinion it is best still to slight him and take no notice of him. This I confess is the most easy way, but cannot tell whether it will be safe in respect to the common people, or will tend so much to the honor of our church and nation. Of this, however, I am pretty

* Welch's List, &c. page 95.

confident, that I can prove all his main objections, whether general or particular, against the shorter copy, to be notoriously false. Such as that pp. 86, 87, 'that the smaller so frequently call Christ God,' which he says was done to serve the turn of the Athanasians, and cannot in reason be supposed to be an omission in the larger, but must be interpolation in the smaller: whereas I find that the smaller call him God but fifteen times, the larger eighteen, and if we take in those to Antioch and Tarsus, twenty-two times, for an obvious reason.

"Again, he says, p. 64, that serious exhortations to practical, especially domestic duties, are in the larger only, being to a surprising degree omitted in the smaller. But I have collected above one hundred instances wherein these duties are most pressingly recommended in the smaller.

"But what he labors most, is to prove that the first quotations in Eusebius and others of the ancients are agreeable to the larger, not the smaller—whereas, on my tracing and comparing them all, as far as I have had opportunity, I have found this assertion to be a palpable mistake, unless in one quotation from the Chronicon Alexandrinum, or Paschale—I would gladly see Montfaucon de causa Marcelli, St. Basil contra Marcellum, observations on Pearson's Vindiciæ, and some good account of the Jewish Sephiroth; because I think the Gnostics, Basilidians, and Valentinians, borrowed many of their Æons from them, since they have the same names; and this might perhaps give further light to the famous ΣΙΓΗ of Ignatius; for the clearing whereof Bishop Pearson, Dr. Bull, and Grotius have so well labored."

This letter shows the spirit and zeal of Mr. Wesley for sound doctrine, and does credit to so young a student. When he had taken his Master's degree, or perhaps before he took it, he was sent for to officiate as Usher at Westminster school; and soon afterwards he took orders, under the patronage of Dr. Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, and Dean of Westminster. He became an able, judicious divine: his conduct in discharging the various duties of life, was exemplary, and did honor to his profession as a Christian and a minister of the gospel. He was a man who had the nicest sense of honor and integrity; and the utmost abhorrence of duplicity and falsehood. He was humane and charitable; not only administering to the wants of the poor and afflicted, as far as his income would permit, but also using his influence with others to procure them relief. In filial affection and duty to parents, he was remarkable; no man in the same circumstances ever shone brighter than he, in this branch of christian duty, through the whole course of his life.

Mr. Samuel Wesley was highly esteemed by Lord Oxford, Bishop Atterbury, Mr. Pope, and several other persons among the first characters in the kingdom, for rank and literary talents. With Lord Oxford and Mr. Pope he held a friendly correspondence; with Bishop

Atterbury he was in close habits of friendship. Atterbury was a man of first-rate abilities: he had a fine genius improved by study, and a spirit to exert his talents. His notions of Church government were very high, and on this subject there was perfect harmony between them. The bishop had made himself an object of hatred to Walpole and the rest of the King's ministers, by the opposition which he gave, in the House of Lords, to their measures; being generally among the protestors, and drawing up the reasons of the protests with his own hand. On the 24th of August, 1722,* he was apprehended under a

* March 23d, 1723, a bill was brought into the House of Commons, for "inflicting certain pains and penalties on Francis Lord Bishop of Rochester." The bill passed the Commons on the 9th of April, and on the 6th of May the bishop was brought to Westminster to make his defence before the House of Lords. In the course of his defence he observes, "Here is a plot of a year or two standing, to subvert the government with an armed force; an invasion from abroad, an insurrection at home: just when ripe for execution it is discovered; and twelve months after the contrivance of this scheme, no consultation appears, no men corresponding together, no provision made, no arms, no officers provided, not a man in arms; and yet the poor bishop has done all this. What could tempt me to step thus out of my way? Was it ambition, and a desire of climbing into a higher station in the Church? There is not a man in my office farther removed from this than I am. Was money my aim? I always despised it too much, considering what occasion I am now like to have for it: for out of a poor bishopric of £500 per annum, I have laid out no less than £1000 towards the repairs of the Church and Episcopal Palace; nor did I take one shilling for dilapidations. Was I influenced by any dislike of the established religion, and secretly inclined to a Church of greater pomp and power? I have, my Lords, ever since I knew what Popery was, opposed it; and the better I knew it the more I opposed it. You will pardon me, my Lords, if I mention one thing: thirty years ago I writ in defence of Martin Luther; and have preached, expressed, and wrote to that purpose from my infancy; and whatever happens to me, I will suffer any thing, and by God's grace burn at the stake, rather than depart from any material point of the Protestant religion, as professed in the Church of England. Once more: can I be supposed to favor arbitrary power? the whole tenor of my life has been otherwise: I was always a friend to the liberty of the subject; and to the best of my power, constantly maintained it." Afterwards, speaking of the proceeding against him as unconstitutional, he says, "my ruin is not of that moment to any number of men, to make it worth their while to violate, or even to seem to violate, the Constitution in any degree, which they ought to preserve against any attempts whatsoever. This is a proceeding with which the Constitutution is unacquainted; which under the pretence of supporting it, will at last effectually destroy it. For God's sake, lay aside these extraordinary proceedings; set not up these new and dangerous precedents. I, for my part, will voluntarily and cheerfully go into perpetual banishment, and please myself that I am in some measure the occasion of putting a stop to such precedents, and doing some good to my country: I will live wherever I am, praying for its prosperity; and do, in the words of Father Paul to the State of Venice, say, Esto perpetua—Let me depart, and let my country be fixed upon the immoveable foundation of law and justice, and stand forever."

"It has been said that Atterbury's wishes reached to the bishopric of London, or even to York or Canterbury. But those who were better acquainted with his views, knew that Winchester would have been much more desirable to him than either of the others. And there are those now living, who have been told from respectable authority, that this bishopric was offered to him, whenever it should become vacant (and till that event should happen a pension of £5000 a year, beside an ample provision for Mr. Morrice) if he would cease to give the opposition he did to Sir Robert Walpole's administration, by his speeches and protests in the House of Lords. When that offer was rejected by the bishop, then the contrivance for his ruin was determined on."—*Encyclopædia Britan., art. Atterbury.*

suspicion of being concerned in a plot to subvert the government, and bring in the Pretender. Mr. Wesley, by his intimacy with him, became an object of dislike to Walpole; and on this ground, only, I believe, has of late years been accused of Jacobitism.* But from the note below it does not appear probable, that Atterbury was guilty of the things alleged against him; and Mr. John Wesley vehemently affirmed that his brother Samuel was not disaffected to the present reigning family. If we consider, that his Father was the first who wrote in defence of the Revolution, and that he mentions this circumstance, apparently with pleasure, it will not appear probable that he was a Jacobite. As Mr. Wesley acted on principle in every part of his conduct, so the banishment of Atterbury made no change in his friendship for him. If he had full conviction of the bishop's innocence, which is probable, it must have given him great pain, to see his friend persecuted, oppressed, and banished by the manœuvres of a Minister of State. It is no wonder this treatment of his friend should raise his indignation to the highest pitch; which seems to have been the case and will be some apology for the severity of his satire in the following verses, which, I believe, he wrote on this occasion.

When patriots sent a bishop cross the seas,
They met to fix the pains and penalties:
While true blue blood-hounds on his death were bent,
Thy mercy, Walpole, voted banishment!
Or forc'd thy sov'reign's orders to perform,
Or proud to govern as to raise the storm.
Thy goodness shown in such a dang'rous day,
He only, who receiv'd it, can repay;
Thou never justly recompens'd canst be,
Till banish'd Francis do the same for thee.

Though some would give Sir Bob no quarter,
But long to hang him in his Garter;
Yet sure he well deserves to have
Such mercy as in pow'r he gave.
Send him abroad to take his ease
By act of pains and penalties:
But if he e'er comes here again,
Law take its course, and hang him then.

Four shillings in the pound we see,
And well may rest contented,
Since war (Bob swore 't should never be)
Is happily prevented.

But he, now absolute become,
May plunder ev'ry penny;
Then blame him not for taking some,
But thank for leaving any.

* If I mistake not, by Mr. Badcock, in Maty's Review.

Let H——— his treasures now confess,
Display'd to ev'ry eye:
'T was base in H——— to sell a peace,
But great in Bob to buy.

Which most promotes great Britain's gain
To all mankind is clear:
One sends our treasure cross the main,
One brings the foreign here.

But if 't is fit to give rewards
Or punishments to either,
Why, make them both together Lords,
Or hang them both together.

At scribblers poor, who rail to eat,
Ye wags give over jeering;
Since gall'd by Harry, Bob the great
Has stoop'd to pamphleteering.

Would not one champion on his side,
For love or money venture;
Must knighthood's mirror, spite of pride
So mean a combat enter.

To take the field his weakness shows,
Though well he could maintain it:
Since H—— no honor has to lose,
Pray how can Robin gain it?

Worthy each other are the two,
Halloo! Boys fairly start ye;
Let those be hated worse than you,
Who ever strive to part ye.

A steward once, the scripture says,
When ordered his accounts to pass,
To gain his master's debtors o'er,
Cried, for a hundred write fourscore.

Near as he could, Sir Robert, bent
To follow gospel precedent,
When told a hundred late would do,
Cried, I beseech you, sir, take two.

In merit which should we prefer,
The steward or the treasurer?
Neither for justice car'd a fig,
Too proud to beg, too old to dig;
Both bountiful themselves have shown,
In things that never were their own:
But here a difference we must grant,
One robb'd the rich, to keep off want;
T' other, vast treasures to secure,
Stole from the public and the poor.

His known attachment to Atterbury, and opposition to Walpole,

blocked up his way to preferment at Westminster; he therefore left his situation at this place about the year 1732, for the free grammar school at Tiverton, in Devon, over which he presided till his death. In 1736 he published a quarto volume of poems, for which he obtained a numerous and respectable list of subscribers. Many of these poems possess a considerable share of excellence; the tales are admirably well told, and highly entertaining: the satire is pointed, and the moral instructive.—The following beautiful verses are a paraphrase on these words in the fourtieth chapter of Isaiah: "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever." They were occasioned by the death of a young lady.

The morning flow'rs display their sweets,
  And gay their silken leaves unfold;
As careless of the noon-day heats,
  And fearless of the evening cold.

Nipp'd by the wind's unkindly blast,
  Parch'd by the sun's directer ray,
The momentary glories waste,
  The short-liv'd beauties die away.

So blooms the human face divine,
  When youth its pride of beauty shows;
Fairer than spring the colors shine,
  And sweeter than the virgin rose.

Or worn by slowly rolling years,
  Or broke by sickness in a day;
The fading glory disappears,
  The short-liv'd beauties die away.

Yet these, new rising from the tomb,
  With lustre brighter far shall shine,
Revive with ever-during bloom,
  Safe from diseases and decline.

Let sickness blast, and death devour,
  If heav'n must recompense our pains;
Perish the grass, and fade the flow'r,
  If firm the word of God remains.

Mr. Samuel Wesley was a very high churchman; and it must be owned, that he was extremely rigid in his principles, which is perhaps the greatest blemish in his character. It has lately been said, that he was prejudiced against some of the highest truths of the gospel, because many of the Dissenters insisted upon them. This is a heavy charge, and if true, would show him to have been a man almost void of principle; but happily it is wholly without foundation: ignorance and prejudice have given it existence.

As an high churchman, Mr. Wesley had objections to extempore prayer. In the duodecimo edition of his poems are the following lines

on forms of prayer, which, for the sprightly turn of thought they contain, I shall insert.

Form stints the spirit, Watts has said,
  And therefore oft is wrong;
At best a crutch the weak to aid,
  A cumbrance to the strong.

Old David, both in prayer and praise,
  A form for crutches brings;
But Watts has dignified his lays,
  And furnish'd him with wings.

Ev'n Watts a form for praise can choose,
  For prayer, who throws it by;
Crutches to walk he can refuse,
  But uses them to fly.

Mr. Samuel Wesley's principles led him to disapprove of the conduct of his brothers, Mr. John and Charles Wesley, when they became itinerant preachers; being afraid they would make a separation from the Church of England. Several letters passed between him and his brother John Wesley, both on the doctrine which he taught, and on his manner of teaching it. I shall have an opportunity of considering some of these letters when I come to that period of Mr. John Wesley's life in which he and Mr. Charles become itinerants.

Mr. Wesley had a bad state of health some time before he left Westminster, and his removal to Tiverton did not much mend it. On the night of the 5th of November, 1739, he went to bed, seemingly as well as usual; was taken ill about three in the morning, and died at seven, after about four hours' illness. But the following letter will state the circumstances more minutely. It was written to the late Mr. Charles Wesley, and by means of a friend I obtained it from among his papers.

Tiverton, Nov. 14, 1739.

"Rev. and Dear Sir,—

"Your brother and my dear friend (for so you are sensible he was to me) on Monday the 5th of November went to bed, as he thought, as well as he had been for some time before; was seized about three o'clock in the morning very ill, when your sister immediately sent for Mr. Norman, and ordered the servant to call me. Mr. Norman came as quick as he possibly could, but said, as soon as he saw him, that he could not get over it, but would die in a few hours. He was not able to take any thing, nor able to speak to us, only yes or no to a question asked him, and that did not last half an hour. I never went from his bed-side till he expired, which was about seven the same morning. With a great deal of difficulty we persuaded your dear sister to leave the room before he died—I trembled to think how she would bear it, knowing the sincere affection and love she had for him—But blessed be God, he hath heard and answered prayer on her

behalf, and in a great measure calmed her spirit, though she has not yet been out of her chamber. Your brother was buried on Monday last in the afternoon—and is gone to reap the fruit of his labors.—I pray God we may imitate him in all his virtues, and be prepared to follow. I should enlarge much more, but have not time; for which reason I hope you will excuse him who is under the greatest obligations to be, and really is, with the greatest sincerity, yours in all things, AMOS MATTHEWS."

In the second edition of his poems in duodecimo, printed at Cambridge, in 1743, there is some account of the author, by a friend, prefixed to it. I know not who the writer of this account was, but as it was written soon after his death, and by a person who seems to have been well acquainted with him, I shall give a short extract from it.

"The author of these poems, the Rev. Mr. Samuel Wesley, frankly declares in his preface to the edition published by himself, that it was not any opinion of excellence in the verses themselves, that occasioned their present collection and publication, but merely the profit proposed by the subscription. If his modesty had permitted him to have been sensible of his own merit, he might, without this, or any other apology, have safely trusted them to speak for themselves: and perhaps the candid reader, upon an impartial perusal, will hardly think them inferior to the most favored and celebrated collections of this kind.

"For though it must be owned, that a certain roughness may be observed to run through them, the vehemence and surprising vivacity of his temper not suffering him to revise, or, as he used to call it, to tinker what he had once finished—yet strong, just, manly sentiments every where occur, set off with all the advantage which a most luxuriant fancy, and a very uncommon compass of knowledge could adorn them with; together with a flowing and unaffected pleasantness in the more humorsome parts, beyond what could proceed from even the happiest talent of wit, unless also accompanied with that innocence and cheerfulness of heart, which to him made life delightful in his laborious station, and endeared his conversation to all, especially his learned and ingenious friends; and many such he had, of all ranks and degrees.

"He was the son of a clergyman in Lincolnshire, from whence he was brought to Westminster school; where having passed through the college as a King's Scholar, he was elected Student of Christ Church in Oxford. In both these places, by the sprightliness of his compositions, and his remarkable industry, he gained a reputation beyond most of his cotemporaries, being thoroughly and critically skilful in the learned languages, and master of the classics to a degree of perfection, perhaps not very common in this last mentioned society, so justly famous for polite learning.

"It must be observed, in justice to his memory, that his wit and

learning were the least part of this worthy man's praise. An open, benevolent temper, which he had from nature, he so cultivated upon principle, that the number and the continual success of his good offices was astonishing even to his friends. He was an instance how exceedingly serviceable in life a person of a very inferior station may be, who sets his heart upon it. His own little income was liberally made use of, and as his acquaintance whom he applied to, were always confident of his care and integrity, he never wanted means to carry on his good purposes. One particular must not be omitted; he was one of the first projectors, and a very careful and active promoter, of the first Infirmary set up at Westminster, for the relief of the sick and needy, in 1719, and had the satisfaction to see it flourish, and to propagate by its example, under the prudent management of other good persons, many pious establishments of the same kind in distant parts of the nation.

The following extracts of letters from his patron, Bishop Atterbury, are too much to his honor not to be mentioned here; they were occasioned by that fine poem on the death of Mrs. Morice, his Lordship's daughter.

"*April* 24, 1730.

"I have received a poem from Mr. Morice, which I must be insensible not to thank you for, your Elegy on the death of Mrs. Morice—I cannot help an impulse upon me, to tell you under my own hand, the satisfaction I feel, the approbation I give, the envy I bear you, for this good work; as a poet and as a man, I thank you, I esteem you."

"*Paris, May* 27, 1730.

"I am obliged to W. for what he has written on my dear child; and take it the more kindly because he could not hope for my being ever in a condition to reward him—though if ever I am, I will; for he has shown an invariable regard for me all along in all circumstances; and much more than some of his acquaintance, who had ten times greater obligations."

"*Paris, June* 30, 1730.

"The Verses you sent me touched me very nearly, and the Latin in the front of them as much as the English that followed. There are a great many good lines in them, and they are writ with as much affection as poetry. They came from the heart of the author, and he has a share of mine in return; and if ever I come back to my country with honor, he shall find it."

These extracts do honor to the feelings of Atterbury as a man; and they give a noble testimony to the disinterested and unchangeable friendship of Mr. Wesley for a person whom he esteemed, and whom he thought deeply injured.

The author of "Some Account of Mr. Samuel Wesley," prefixed to his poems, informs us that the following inscription was put upon his grave-stone in the church-yard at Tiverton.

Here lie interr'd
The remains of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, A. M.
Some time Student of Christ Church, Oxon:
A man, for his uncommon wit and learning,
For the benevolence of his temper,
And simplicity of manners
Deservedly beloved and esteemed by all.
An excellent Preacher:
But whose best sermon
Was, the constant example of an edifying life.
So continually and zealously employed
In acts of beneficence and charity,
That he truly followed
His blessed Master's example
In going about doing good.
Of such scrupulous integrity,
That he declined occasions of advancement in the world
Through fear of being involved in dangerous compliances,
And avoided the usual ways to preferment
As studiously as many others seek them.
Therefore after a life spent
In the laborious employment of teaching youth,
First, for near twenty years
As one of the Ushers in Westminster School;
Afterwards for seven years
As Head Master of the Free School at Tiverton,
He resigned his soul to God,
Nov. 6, 1739, in the 49th year of his age.

CHAPTER VI.

Some Account of the Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley, A. M.

SECTION I.

OF HIS BIRTH, AND EDUCATION UNTIL HIS ORDINATION IN 1735.

Mr. Charles Wesley was born December 18, 1708, old style, several weeks before his time, at Epworth in Lincolnshire; being about five years younger than his brother John Wesley, and about sixteen younger than Samuel.

He appeared dead rather than alive when he was born. He did not cry, nor open his eyes, and was kept wrapt up in soft wool until the time when he should have been born according to the usual course of nature, and then he opened his eyes and cried.

He received the first rudiments of learning at home, under the pious care of his mother, as all the other children did. In 1716 he was sent to Westminster school, and placed under the care of his

eldest brother Samuel Wesley, an high churchman, who educated him in his own principles. He was exceedingly sprightly and active; very apt to learn, but arch and unlucky, though not ill-natured.

When he had been some years at school, Mr. R. Wesley, a gentleman of large fortune in Ireland, wrote to his father, and asked if he had any son named Charles; if so, he would make him his heir. Accordingly a gentleman in London brought money for his education several years. But one year another gentleman called, probably Mr. Wesley himself, talked largely with him, and asked if he was willing to go with him to Ireland. Mr. Charles desired to write to his father, who answered immediately, and referred it to his own choice. He chose to stay in England. Mr. W. then found and adopted another Charles Wesley, who was the late Earl of M—n—g—n. A fair escape, says Mr. John Wesley, from whose short account of his brother I have taken this anecdote.

From this time Mr. Charles Wesley depended chiefly on his brother Samuel till 1721, when he was admitted a scholar of St. Peter's College, Westminster.* He was now a King's scholar; and as he advanced in age and learning, he acted dramas, and at length became captain of the school. In 1726 he was elected to Christ Church, Oxford,† at which time his brother was Fellow of Lincoln College. Mr. John Wesley gives the following account of him after he came to Oxford: "He pursued his studies diligently, and led a regular harmless life: but if I spoke to him about religion, he would warmly answer, 'What, would you have me to be a saint all at once?' and would hear no more. I was then near three years my father's curate. During most of this time he continued much the same; but in the year 1729 I observed his letters grew much more serious, and when I returned to Oxford in November that year, I found him in great earnestness to save his soul."

Mr. Charles Wesley gives the following account of himself for the first year or two after he went to Oxford.‡ "My first year at college I lost in diversions: the next I set myself to study. Diligence led me into serious thinking: I went to the weekly sacrament, and persuaded two or three young students to accompany me, and to observe the method of study prescribed by the statutes of the university. This gained me the harmless name of Methodist. In half a year (after this) my brother left his curacy at Epworth, and came to our assistance. We then proceeded regularly in our studies, and in doing what good we could to the bodies and souls of men."

It was in the year 1728, in the twentieth year of his age, that he began to apply more closely to study, and to be more serious in his gene-

* Welch's List of Scholars of St. Peter's College, Westminster, as they were elected to Christ-church College, Oxford, and Trinity College, Cambridge, p. 105.

† Ibid. p. 110.

‡ In his letter to Dr. Chandler.

ral deportment than usual. He soon gave proof of his sincere desire to be truly religious, by expressing a wish to write a diary, in which he intended to register daily the state of his mind, and the actions of the day. A diary of this kind, faithfully kept, is a delineation of a man's moral and religious character; it is a moral picture of the man accurately drawn. No man wishes to draw his own character in this way, in every little circumstance of life, and to review it often, but he who is desirous to think and act rightly, and to improve daily in knowledge and virtue. He knew that his brother, Mr. John Wesley, had kept such a diary for several years, and was able to give him instructions how to proceed. He therefore wrote to him in January, 1729, as follows: "I would willingly write a diary of my actions, but do not know how to go about it. What particulars am I to take notice of? Am I to give my thoughts and words, as well as deeds, a place in it? I am to mark all the good and ill I do; and what besides? Must I not take account of my progress in learning, as well as religion? What cypher can I make use of? If you would direct me to the same, or like method to your own, I would gladly follow it, for I am fully convinced of the usefulness of such an undertaking. I shall be at a stand till I hear from you.

"God has thought fit, it may be to increase my wariness, to deny me at present your company and assistance. It is through him strengthening me, I trust to maintain my ground till we meet. And I hope, that neither before nor after that time, I shall relapse into my former state of insensibility. It is through your means, I firmly believe, that God will establish what he has begun in me; and there is no one person I would so willingly have to be the instrument of good to me as you. It is owing, in great measure, to somebody's prayers (my mother's most likely) that I am come to think as I do; for I cannot tell myself, how or when I awoke out of my lethargy—only that it was not long after you went away."

The enemies of the Christian Revelation, and friends of Deism, were so much increased about this time, and were become so bold and daring in their attempts to propagate their principles in the university, as to rouse the attention of the Vice-Chancellor; who, with the consent of the Heads of Houses and Proctors, issued the following *programma*, or edict, which was fixed up in most of the halls of the university.

"Whereas there is too much reason to believe, that some members of the university have of late been in danger of being corrupted by ill-designing persons, who have not only entertained wicked and blasphemous notions, contrary to the truth of the christian religion; but have endeavored to instil the same ill principles into others: and the more effectually to propagate their infidelity, have applied their poison to the unguarded inexperience of less informed minds, where they thought it might operate with better success; carefully conceal-

ing their impious tenets from those whose riper judgment and more wary conduct might discover their false reasoning, and disappoint the intended progress of their infidelity. And whereas therefore, it is more especially necessary at this time, to guard the youth of this place against these wicked advocates for pretended human reason against divine revelation, and to enable them the better to defend their religion, and to expose the pride and impiety of those who endeavor to undermine it; Mr. Vice-Chancellor, with the consent of the Heads of Houses and Proctors, has thought fit to recommend it, as a matter of the utmost consequence, to the several tutors of each college and hall in the university, that they discharge their duty by a double diligence, in informing their respective pupils in their christian duty, as also in explaining to them the articles of religion which they profess, and are often called upon to subscribe, and in recommending to them the frequent and careful reading of the Scriptures, and such other books as may serve more effectually to promote christianity, sound principles, and orthodox faith. And further, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, with the same consent, does hereby forbid the said youth the reading of such books as may tend to the weakening of their faith, the subverting of the authority of the scripture, and the introducing of deism, profaneness and irreligion in their stead."—The Dean of Christ Church was so much a friend to infidelity, that he would not suffer this *programma* to be put up in the hall of his college.

It is always pleasing to a pious mind, to trace the ways of providence, not only as they relate to individuals, but as they affect large bodies of men, collectively considered. In the case before us there is something worthy of observation. At the very time when the friends of infidelity were making so strong an effort to propagate their principles in this celebrated seminary of learning, God was preparing two or three young men, to plant a religious society in the same place; which should grow up with vigor, and spread its branches through several countries, in opposition to the baneful influence of infidelity and profaneness.

In the course of the following summer Mr. Charles Wesley became more and more serious, and began to be singularly diligent, both in the means of grace and in his studies. His zeal for God began already to kindle, and manifest itself in exertions to do good beyond the common round of religious duties. He endeavored to awaken an attention to religion in the minds of some of the students, and was soon successful in one or two instances. This appears from the following letter, which he wrote to his brother John Wesley in May, 1729. "Providence has at present put it into my power to do some good. I have a modest, humble, well disposed youth lives next me, and have been, thank God, somewhat instrumental in keeping him so. He was got into vile hands, and is now broke loose. I assisted

in setting him free, and will do my utmost to hinder him from getting in with them again. He was of opinion that passive goodness was sufficient; and would fain have kept in with his acquaintance and God at the same time. He durst not receive the sacrament, but at the usual times, for fear of being laughed at. By convincing him of the duty of frequent communicating, I have prevailed on both of us to receive once a week.

"I earnestly long for, and desire the blessing God is about to send me in you. I am sensible *this* is my day of grace; and that upon my employing the time before our meeting and next parting, will in great measure depend my condition for eternity."

From these extracts of two of Mr. Charles Wesley's letters to his brother, and from the account which he has given of himself in a letter to Dr. Chandler, the following particulars appear evident. 1. That he was awakened to a most serious and earnest desire of being truly religious and devoted to God, while his brother was at Epworth, as his father's curate. 2. That he observed an exact *method* in his studies, and in his attendance on the duties of religion; receiving the sacrament once a week. 3. That he persuaded two or three young gentlemen to join him in these things, among whom I believe Morgan was one. 4. That the exact method and order which he observed in spending his time, and regulating his conduct, gained him the name of Methodist. Hence it appears that Mr. Charles Wesley was the first Methodist, and laid the foundation of that little society at Oxford, which afterwards made so much noise in the world: but it does not appear that any regular meetings were held, or that the members had extended their views beyond their own improvement in knowledge and virtue, until Mr. John Wesley left his curacy, and came to reside wholly at Oxford in November, 1729. The beginning of this society was small, and it appeared contemptible to those around; but events have shown, that it was big with consequences of the utmost importance to the happiness of thousands. So little do men know beforehand of the designs of providence.

Man was made for social intercourse with man. A well regulated society of a few well chosen persons, improves the understanding, invigorates the powers of the mind, strengthens our resolutions, and animates us to perseverance in the execution of our designs. These were the happy effects of the union of the two brothers in November this year, when Mr. John Wesley left Epworth, and came to reside at Oxford. They now formed a regular society, and quickened the diligence and zeal of each other in the execution of their pious purposes. About this time Mr. Charles began to take pupils. On this occasion his father wrote to him as follows, in a letter dated January, 1730, when Charles had just passed the twenty-first year of his age. "I had your last, and you may easily guess whether I were not well pleased with it, both on your account and my own. You have a

double advantage by your pupils, which will soon bring you more, if you will improve it, as I firmly hope you will, by taking the utmost care to form their minds to piety as well as learning. As for yourself, between logic, grammar, and mathematics, be idle if you can. I give my blessing to the bishop for having tied you a little faster, by obliging you to rub up your Arabic: and a fixed and constant method will make the whole both pleasing and delightful to you. But for all that, you must find time every day for walking, which you know you may do with advantage to your pupils; and a little more robust exercise, now and then, will do you no harm. You are now launched fairly, Charles; hold up your head, and swim like a man; and when you cuff the wave beneath you, say to it, much as another hero did,

Carolum vehis, et Caroli fortunam.*

But always keep your eye fixed above the pole-star, and so God send you a good voyage through the troublesome sea of life, which is the hearty prayer of your loving father."

Mr. Charles Wesley and his brother John had been always united in affection; they were now united in their pursuit of learning, their views of religion, and their endeavors to do good. Mr. Morgan was to them as another brother, and united together, they were as a threefold cord, which is not easily broken. Though few in number, of little reputation in the world, and unsupported by any powerful allies, yet they boldly lifted up their standard against infidelity and profaneness, the common enemies of religion and virtue. They did not indeed, at present, make any great inroads into the enemy's territory, but they bravely kept their ground, and defended their little fort with success, against every attempt of the enemy to dislodge them. When death robbed them of Morgan, the two brothers remained unshaken in their purpose. They were the bond of union between the members of their little society at Oxford; and if one or more of these deserted them, through fear, or shame, or being weary of restraint, they stood firm as a rock, persevering in their resolution to serve God and do good to men, without the least shadow of wavering, through evil report and good report, as if alike insensible to either. Happily, they were not hurried on by a rash intemperate zeal in their proceedings; which is the common failing of young men. They were cautious and wary, using every prudential means in their power, to prevent the good that was in them from being evil spoken of. Charles had much more fire, and openness of temper than his brother; but he was not less cautious in this respect. If any doubts arose in his mind; or if any practice, which he thought proper and commendable, seemed likely to give great offence to others, he asked the advice of those who were older and wiser than himself, how he

* Thou carriest Charles, and Charles' fortune.

ought to proceed. This appears from a letter which he wrote to his father in June, 1731, in which he says, "On Whitsunday the whole college received the sacrament, except the servitors (for we are too well bred to communicate with them, though in the body and blood of Christ) to whom it was administered the next day; on which I was present at church, but with the Canons left the sacrament to those for whom alone it was prepared. What I would beg to be resolved in is, whether or no my being assured I should give infinite scandal by staying, could sufficiently justify me in turning my back of God's ordinance. It is a question my future conduct is much concerned in, and I shall therefore earnestly wait for your decision."

Mr. Charles Wesley proceeded Master of Arts in the usual course, and thought only of spending all his days at Oxford as a tutor; for he "exceedingly dreaded entering into holy orders."* In 1735, Mr. John Wesley yielded to the pressing solicitations of Mr. Oglethorpe, Dr. Burton, and some others, to go to Georgia as a missionary to preach to the Indians, and he prevailed on his brother Charles to accompany him. Their brother Samuel consented that Mr. John Wesley should go, but vehemently opposed the design of Charles to accompany him. But his opposition had no effect, for Mr. Charles engaged himself as secretary to Mr. Oglethorpe, and also as secretary to Indian affairs, and in this character he went to Georgia. A little before they left England, Dr. Burton suggested that it might be well if Mr. Charles Wesley was ordained before he left this country. His brother John overruled his inclination in this thing also, and he was ordained Deacon by Dr. Potter, Bishop of Oxford: and the Sunday following, Priest, by Dr. Gibson, Bishop of London.†

SECTION II.

OF MR. CHARLES WESLEY'S VOYAGE TO GEORGIA, HIS SITUATION THERE, AND RETURN TO ENGLAND IN 1736.

They sailed from Gravesend on the 22d of October, 1735, but meeting with contrary winds, they did not leave Cowes till the 10th of December. Mr. Charles Wesley preached several times while they were detained here, and great crowds attended his ministry. His brother Samuel, who was violently against his going abroad, observes, that he hoped Charles was convinced by this instance, that he needed not to have gone to Georgia to convert sinners. After a stormy passage they arrived in Savannah river, Feb. 5th, 1736, and Mr. John Wesley was appointed to take charge of Savannah; Mr. Charles of Frederica; waiting for an opportunity of preaching to the Indians.

* His letter to Dr. Chandler. † Ibid.

Mr. Charles Wesley did not enter on his ministry till March 9th, when he first set foot on Simon's Island, and his spirit immediately revived. No sooner did I enter on my ministry, says he, than God gave me a new heart; so true is that saying of Bishop Hall, "The calling of God never leaves a man unchanged; neither did God ever employ any in his service whom he did not enable for the work." The first person that saluted him on landing, was his friend Mr. Ingham: "Never," says he, "did I more rejoice to see him; especially when he told me the treatment he had met with for vindicating the Lord's day. This specimen of the ignorance and unteachable temper of the people among whom he had to labor was unpromising, but he little expected the trials and dangers which lay before him." Like a faithful and diligent pastor, he immediately entered on his office; not with joy at the prospect of a good income, but with fear and trembling, at the views which he had of the importance and difficulty of the ministerial office. In the afternoon he began to converse with his parishioners, without which he well knew, that general instructions often lose their effect. But he observes on this occasion, "With what trembling should I call them mine." He felt as every minister of the gospel ought to feel when he takes upon him to guide others in the ways of God. In the evening he read prayers in the open air, at which Mr. Oglethorpe was present. The lesson was remarkably adapted to his situation, and he felt the full force of it, both in the way of direction and encouragement. "Continue instant in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ, that I may make it manifest as I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom toward those that are without, redeeming the time.—Say to Archippus, take heed to the ministry which thou hast received of the Lord that thou fulfil it." After the labors of the day, he returned and slept in the boat.

The colony was at this time very scantily provided with accommodations. There was no place erected where the people could assemble for public worship; for on March 10th between five and six in the morning, Mr. Charles Wesley read short prayers to a few persons, before Mr. Oglethorpe's tent, in a hard shower of rain. He afterwards talked with Mrs. W. who had come in the ship with him and his brother, and endeavored to guard her against the cares of the world, and to persuade her to give herself up to God; but in vain. In the evening he endeavored to reconcile her and Mrs. H. who were greatly at variance, but to no purpose.

Some of the women now began to be jealous of each other, and to raise animosities and divisions in the colony, which gave a great deal of trouble to Mr. Oglethorpe. Mr. Wesley's serious and religious deportment, his constant presence with them, and his frequent reproof of their licentious behavior, soon made him an object of hatred; and

plans were formed either to ruin him in the opinion of Mr. Oglethorpe, or to take him off by violence. We shall see these plans open by degrees.

March 11th, at ten in the morning, he began the full service to about a dozen women whom he had got together, intending to continue it, and only to read a few prayers to the men before they went to work. He also expounded the second lesson with some degree of boldness, which he had done several times before; and it is probable that he did this extempore. After prayers he met Mrs. H.'s maid in a great passion and flood of tears, at the treatment she had received from her mistress. She seemed determined to destroy herself, to escape her Egyptian bondage. He prevailed with her to return, and went with her home. He asked Mrs. H. to forgive her; but she refused with the utmost roughness, rage, and almost reviling. He next met Mr. Tackner, who, he observes, made him full amends: he was in an excellent temper, resolved to strive, not with his wife, but with himself, in putting off the old man, and putting on the new. In the evening he received the first harsh word from Mr. Oglethorpe, when he asked for something for a poor woman. The next day he received a rougher answer in a matter which deserved still greater encouragement. 'I know not,' says he, 'how to account for his increasing coldness.' His encouragement, he observes, was the same in speaking with Mrs. W. whom he found all storm and tempest; so wilful, so untractable, so fierce, that he could not bear to stay near her. This evening Mr. Oglethorpe was with the men under arms, in expectation of an enemy, but in the same ill humor with Mr. Wesley. "I staid," says he, "as long as I could, however unsafe, within the wind of such commotion; but at last the hurricane of his passion drove me away."

Mr. Wesley's situation was now truly alarming; not only as it regarded his usefulness, but as it affected his safety. Many persons lost all decency in their behavior towards him, and Mr. Oglethorpe's treatment of him showed that he had received impressions greatly to his disadvantage; at the same time he was totally ignorant of his accusers, and of what he was accused. But being conscious of his own innocence he trusted in God, and considered his sufferings as a part of the portion of those who will live godly in Christ Jesus, especially if they persuade others to walk in the same rule. Sunday, March 14th, he read prayers, and preached with boldness in singleness of intention, under a great tree, to about twenty people, among whom was Mr. Oglethorpe. "In the Epistle," says he, "I was plainly shown what I ought to be, and what I ought to expect. 'Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed, but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of Christ; in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distress, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings,' &c."

At night he found himself exceedingly faint; but had no better bed

to lie down upon than the ground; on which he says, "I slept very comfortably before a great fire, and waked next morning perfectly well."

He spent March 16th wholly in writing letters for Mr. Oglethorpe. He had now been six days at Frederica; and observes, "I would not spend six days more in the same manner for all Georgia." But he had more than six days to spend in no better a situation, without being able to make any conditions.

Mr. Charles Wesley, as well as his brother John, was so fully convinced at this time, that immersion was the ancient mode of baptizing, that he determined to adhere strictly to the rubric of the church of England in relation to it, and not to baptize any child by sprinkling, unless it was sickly and weak. This occasioned some contention among his people, who were governed chiefly by their passions, and a spirit of opposition. However, by perseverance and mild persuasion, he prevailed with some of them to consent to it, and about this time, he adds with apparent pleasure, "I baptized Mr. Colwell's child by true immersion, before a large congregation."

March 18, Mr. Oglethorpe set out with the Indians to hunt the buffalo upon the main, and to see the utmost limits of what they claimed.—This day Mrs. W. discovered to Mr. Wesley "the whole mystery of iniquity." I suppose he means the plots and designs which were formed, chiefly against himself.

He went to his myrtle grove, and while he was repeating, "I will thank thee, for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation," a gun was fired from the other side of the bushes. Providentially he had the moment before turned from that end of the walk where the shot entered, and heard it pass close by him. This was, apparently, a design upon his life.

A circumstance now took place which soon brought on an explanation between Mr. Oglethrope and Mr. Wesley. Mr. Oglethorpe had, more than once, given orders that no man should shoot on a Sunday; and Germain had been confined in the guard-room for it. In the midst of sermon, on Sunday the 21st, a gun was fired: the constable ran out, and found it was the Doctor, and told him it was contrary to orders, and he must go with him to the officer. The Doctor's passion kindled; "What," said he, "don't you know that I am not to be looked upon as a common fellow?" The constable not knowing what to do, went back, and after consulting with Hermsdorff, returned with two sentinels, and took him to the guard-room. His wife then charged and fired a gun, and ran thither like a mad woman, and said she had shot, and would be confined too. She curst and swore in the utmost transport of rage, threatening to kill the first man that should come near her; but at last was persuaded to go away. In the afternoon she fell upon Mr. Wesley in the street with the greatest bitterness and scurrility: said he was the cause of

her husband's confinement, but she would be revenged, &c. &c. He replied, that he pitied her, but defied all that she or the devil could do; and he hoped she would soon be of a better mind. "In my evening hour of retirement," says he, "I resigned myself to God, in prayer for conformity to a suffering Saviour."

Before prayers this evening he took a walk with Mr. Ingham, who seemed surprized that he should not think innocence a sufficient protection: but Mr. Wesley had not acquainted him with the information he had received of designs formed against him.—At night, he tells us, "I was forced to exchange my usual bed, the ground, for a chest, being almost speechless with a violent cold."

Mr. Oglethorpe was now expected to return from his excursion with the Indians, and such was the violence of the party formed against Mr. Wesley, that the Doctor sent his wife to arm herself from the case of instruments, and forcibly to make her escape to speak to him first on his landing, and even to stab any person who should oppose her. "I was encouraged," says Mr. Wesley, "from the lesson, God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power—Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord," &c. March 24th, "I was enabled to pray earnestly for my enemies, particularly for Mr. Oglethorpe, whom I now looked upon as the chief of them—Then gave myself up entirely to God's disposal, desiring that I might not now want power to pray, when I most of all needed it—Mr. Ingham then came and read the 37th psalm, a glorious exhortation to patience, and confidence in God.—When notice was given us of Mr. Oglethorpe's landing, Mr. H., Mr. Ingham, and I were sent for. We found him in his tent, with the people around it, and Mr. and Mrs. H. within. After a short hearing the officers were reprimanded, and the prisoners dismissed. At going out Mrs. H. modestly told me, she had something more to say against me, but she would take another opportunity—I only answered, 'you know, Madam, it is impossible for me to fear you.' When they were gone, Mr. Oglethorpe said, he was convinced and glad that I had no hand in all this—I told him that I had something to impart of the last importance, when he was at leisure. He took no notice, but read his letters, and I walked away with Mr. Ingham, who was utterly astonished. The issue is just what I expected—I was struck with these words in the evening lesson: 'Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus: remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, according to my gospel, wherein I suffer trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds, but the word of God is not bound, therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake. It is a faithful saying; for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him—After reading these words, I could not forbear adding, I need say nothing; God will shortly apply this—Glory be to God for my confidence hitherto—O! what am I, if

left to myself; but I can do and suffer all things through Christ strengthening me."

He goes on: "Thursday, March 25th, I heard the second drum beat for prayers, which I had desired Mr. Ingham to read, being much weakened by my fever; but considering that I ought to appear at this time especially, I rose, and heard those animating words, 'If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am there shall my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my Father honor,' &c. At half past seven, Mr. Oglethorpe called me out of my hut; I looked up to God and went. He charged me with mutiny and sedition; with stirring up the people to leave the colony. Accordingly he said, they had a meeting last night, and sent to him this morning, desiring leave to go—That their speaker had informed against them, and me the spring of all—That the men were such as constantly came to prayers, therefore I must have instigated them—That he should not scruple shooting half a dozen of them at once, but that he had, out of kindness, first spoken to me. My answer was, 'I desire, sir, that you would have no regard to my friends, or the love you had for me, if any thing of this charge be made out against me—I know nothing of their meeting or designs. Of those you have mentioned, not one comes to prayers or sacrament—I never invited any one to leave the colony—I desire to answer accusers face to face.' He said my accuser was Mr. Lawley, whom he would bring, if I would wait here—I added, Mr. Lawley is a man who has declared, that he knows no reason for keeping fair with any one, but a design to get all he can by him; but there was nothing to be got by the poor parson. I asked whether he was not assured that there were men enough in Frederica, who would say or swear any thing against any man, if he were in disgrace—Whether if he himself was removed, or succeeded ill, the whole stream of the people would not be turned against him; and even this Lawley, who was of all others the most violent in condemning the prisoners, and justifying the officers? I observed, this was the old cry, away with the Christians to the lions—I mentioned R. and his wife scandalizing my brother and me, and vowing revenge against us both, threatening me yesterday even in his presence. I asked what satisfaction or redress was due to my character—What good I could do in my parish, if cut off by calumnies from ever seeing one half of it? I ended with assuring him, that I had, and should make it my business to promote peace among all."

"When Mr. Oglethorpe returned with Lawley, he observed the place was too public—I offered to take him to my usual walk in the woods—In the way, it came into my mind to say to Mr. Oglethorpe, 'show only the least disinclination to find me guilty, and you shall see what a turn it will give to the accusation.' He took the hint, and insisted on Lawley to make good his charge. He began with the quarrel in general, but did not show himself angry with me, or

desirous to find me to blame. Lawley, who appeared full of guilt and fear, upon this dropt his accusation, or rather shrunk it into my forcing the people to prayers. I replied, the people themselves would acquit me of that; and as to the quarrel of the officers, I appealed to the officers themselves for the truth of my assertion, that I had no hand at all in it. I professed my desire and resolution of promoting peace and obedience—Here Mr. Oglethorpe spoke of reconciling matters: bid Lawley tell the people, that he would not so much as ask who they were, if they were but quiet for the future. 'I hope,' added he, 'they will be so; and Mr. Wesley here, hopes so too.' 'Yes,' says Lawley, 'I really believe it of Mr. Wesley: I had always a great respect for him.' I turned and said to Mr. Oglethorpe, 'did I not tell you it would be so?' He replied to Lawley, 'yes, you had always a very great respect for Mr. Wesley; you told me he was a stirrer up of sedition, and at the bottom of all this disturbance.' With this gentle reproof he dismissed him; and I thanked Mr. Oglethorpe for having first spoken to me of the things of which I was accused, begging he would always do so, which he promised. I walked with him to Mrs. H.'s door; she came out aghast to see me with him. He there left me, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."

"I went to my hut, where I found Mr. Ingham; he said, this was but the beginning of sorrows—'Not as I will, but as thou wilt.' About noon, in the midst of a storm of thunder and lightning, I read the 28th psalm, and found it gloriously suited to my circumstances. I never felt the Scriptures as now. I now find them all written for my instruction or comfort. At the same time I felt great joy in the expectation of our Saviour's thus coming to judgment: when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, and God shall make my innocency as clear as the light, and my just dealing as the noon day."

"At three in the afternoon I walked with Mr. Ingham, and read him the history of this amazing day. We rejoiced together in the protection of God, and through comfort of the Scriptures. The evening lesson was full of encouragement. 'This know, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded; but they shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be made manifest to all men, &c. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable,' &c. Blessed be God that I begin to find them so. Meeting with Mr. Hird, I persuaded him to use all his interest with the people, to lay aside their thoughts of leaving the colony. He told me that he had assured Mr. Oglethorpe that this was always my language to him and the rest; and that I had no hand in the late disturbance; but was answered short, 'You must not tell me that; I know better.' After spending an hour at the camp, in singing such psalms as suited the occasion, I went to bed in the hut, which was thoroughly wet with to-day's rain."

"March 26. My soul is always in my hand, therefore will I not forget thy law. This morning early Mr. Oglethorpe called me out to tell me of Mrs. Lawley's miscarriage, by being denied access to the Doctor for bleeding. He seemed very angry, and to charge me with it; saying he should be the tyrant if he passed by such intolerable injuries. I answered, that I knew nothing of the matter, and it was hard that it should be imputed to me. That from the first Hermsdorf told the Doctor he might visit any patients that he pleased, but the Doctor would not visit any. I denied that I had the least hand in the business, as Hermsdorf himself had declared; and yet I must be charged with all the mischief. 'How else can it be,' said he, 'that there is no love, no meekness, no true religion among the people; but instead of this, mere formal prayers?' I said, 'as to that I can answer for them, that they have no more of the form of godliness than the power: for I have seldom more than six at the public service.' 'But what would an unbeliever say to your raising these disorders?' I answered, 'if I had raised them, he might say there is nothing in religion, but what would that signify to those who had experienced it? they would not say so.' He said the people were full of dread and confusion—that it was much more easy to govern a thousand than sixty persons—that he durst not leave them before they were settled. I asked him whether he would have me altogether forbear to converse with my parishioners? To this I could get no answer. I went on to observe, that the reason why I did not interpose for or against the Doctor, was his having at the beginning charged me with his confinement. I said, 'I have talked less with my parishioners these five days past, than I had done in any one afternoon before. I have shunned appearing in public, lest my advice should be asked; or, lest if I heard others talking, my silence should be deciphered into advice. But one argument of my innocence I can give, which will convince even you of it. I know my life is in your hands; and you know that were you to frown upon me, and give the least intimation that it would be agreeable to you, the generality of this wretched people would say or swear anything.' To this he agreed, and owned the case was so with them all. 'You see,' said I, 'that my safety depends on your single opinion of me: must I not therefore be mad, if, in such a situation, I should provoke you by disturbing the public peace? Innocence, I know, is not the least protection, but my sure trust is in God.' Here company interrupted us, and I left him. I was no longer careful for the event, after reading those words in the morning lesson, 'Thou shalt not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards.' Amen: When thou pleasest, thy time is best."

While we pity the situation, we cannot but admire the genuine piety, the patience and prudent conduct of this good man, in the midst of such severe and unexpected trials. Though yet in the storm, he writes to his brother with a degree of calmness and moderation which shows the greatness of his mind.

"*Frederica, March 27th.*

"DEAR BROTHER,—

"I received your letter and box. My last to you was opened, the contents being publicly proclaimed by those who were so ungenerous as to intercept it. I have not yet complained to Mr. Oglethorpe—Though I trust I shall never either write or speak what I will not justify both to God and man, yet I would not have the secrets of my soul revealed to every one. For their sakes, therefore, as well as for my own, I shall write no more, and desire you will not. Nor will you have occasion, as you visit us so soon. I hope your coming may be of use to many.

"Mr. Oglethorpe gave me an exceeding necessary piece of advice for you—'Beware of hypocrites, in particular of log-house converts.' They consider you as favored by Mr. Oglethorpe, and will therefore put on the form of religion, to please—not God, but you. To this I shall only add, Give no temporal encouragement whatsoever to any seeming converts, else they will follow you for the sake of the loaves. Convince them thus, that it can never be worth their while to be hypocrites. Stay till you are in disgrace, in persecution, by the heathen, by your own countrymen; till you are accounted the off-scouring of all things (as you must infallibly be, if God is true), and then see who will follow you.—I.

"God, you believe, has much work to do in America. I believe so too, and begin to enter into the designs which he has over me. I see why he brought me hither; and hope ere long to say with Ignatius, 'It is now that I begin to be a disciple of Christ.' God direct you to pray for me. Adieu."

On the evening of the day when Mr. Charles Wesley wrote this letter, a thought came into his mind to send Mr. Ingham for his brother. Mr. Ingham was at first much averse to leave him in his trials, but at length was persuaded to go to Savannah, and Mr. John Wesley set out from thence on the 4th of April.* I shall now pursue Mr. Charles' narrative.

"Sunday, March 28. I went to the storehouse, our tabernacle at present, to hearken what the Lord God would say concerning both myself and the congregation. I was struck with the first lesson, Joseph and Potiphar's wife. The second was still more animating. 'If the world hate you, ye know it hated me before it hated you; if ye were of the world,' &c. After prayers, poor Mr. Davison staid behind to take his leave of Mr. Ingham. He burst into tears, and said, 'one good man is leaving us already; I foresee nothing but desolation. Must my poor children be brought up like these savages?' We endeavored to comfort him, by showing him his calling. At ten o'clock Mr. Ingham preached an alarming sermon on the day of judgment. In my walk at noon I was full of heaviness; I complained to God

* See Mr. Wesley's Journal, vol. xxvi. of his Works, pp. 127, 128.

that I had no friend but him, and even in him could find no comfort. Immediately I received power to pray; then opening my Bible, I read as follows: 'Hearken unto me, ye that seek the Lord; look unto the rock from whence you were hewn: fear not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their reviling. Awake, awake, flee away; who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and hast feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor? and where is the fury of the oppressor?' After reading this, it is no wonder that I found myself renewed in confidence. While Mr. Ingham waited for the boat, I took a turn with Mr. Horton: he fully convinced me of the true character of Mrs. H. In the highest degree ungrateful, &c. &c. I then hasted to the water-side, where I found Mr. Ingham just put off. O! happy happy friend! *abiit, erupit, evasit:* * but woe is me that I am still constrained to dwell in Meshech. I languished to bear him company, followed him with my eye till out of sight, and then sunk into deeper dejection of spirit than I had known before."

"March 29. I was revived with those words of our Lord: 'These things have I spoken unto you, that you should not be offended. They shall put you out of their synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he doeth God service,' &c. Knowing when I left England, that I was to live with Mr. Oglethorpe, I brought nothing with me but my clothes and books. This morning asking a servant for something I wanted, I think a tea-kettle, he told me that Mr. Oglethorpe had given orders that no one should use his things. I answered, that order, I supposed, did not extend to me: 'yes, sir,' said he, 'you were excepted by name.' Thanks be to God, that it is not yet made capital to give me a morsel of bread.

"March 30. Having lain hitherto on the ground, in a corner of Mr. Reed's hut, and hearing some boards were to be disposed of, I attempted in vain to get some of them to lie upon—they were given to all besides—the minister of Frederica only must be αφρητωρ, αθεμιστος, ανεστιος.† Yet are we not hereunto called αστατειν, κακοπαθειν.‡ Even the Son of Man had not where to lay his head—I find the Scriptures an inexhaustible fund of comfort—'Is my hand shortened at all that I cannot save, or have I no power to deliver'—Behold the Lord God will help me, who is he that shall condemn me?

"March 31. I begin now to be abused and slighted into an opinion of my own considerableness. I could not be more trampled upon, were I a fallen minister of state. The people have found out that I am in disgrace, and all the cry is, 'curramus præcipites, et dum jacet in ripa, calcemus Cæsaris hostem.'§ My few well-wishers are afraid to speak to me; some have turned out of the way to avoid me; oth-

* He is gone; he has broke loose; he has escaped.

† Treated as an enemy to society, as an unjust person, and be destitute of an habitation.

‡ To have no certain dwelling-place; to suffer afflictions. 1 Cor. iv. 11. 2 Tim. iv. 5.

§ Let us run quick, and while he is down let us trample on the enemy of Cæsar.

ers have desired that I would not take it ill if they seemed not to know me when we should meet. The servant that used to wash my linen, sent it back unwashed. It was great cause of triumph that I was forbid the use of Mr. Oglethrope's things; which in effect debarred me of most of the conveniences, if not the necessaries of life—I sometimes pitied them, and sometimes diverted myself with the odd expressions of their contempt: but I found the benefit of having undergone a much lower degree of obloquy at Oxford."

"April 1. In the midst of morning service, a poor Scout boatman was brought in, who was almost killed by the bursting of a cannon. I found him senseless and dying; and all I could do, was to pray for him, and try by his example to wake his two companions. He languished till the next day, and then died. Hitherto I have been borne up by a spirit not my own: but exhausted nature sinks at last. It is amazing she has held out so long. My outward hardships and inward conflicts; the bitterness of reproach from the only man I wished to please, down at last have worn my boasted courage. Accordingly this afternoon, I was forced by a friendly fever to take my bed. My sickness, I knew, could not be of long continuance, as I was in want of every help and convenience; it must either soon leave me, or release me from further sufferings. In the evening Mr. Hird and Mr. Robinson called to see me, and offered me all the assistance in their power. I thanked them, but desired they would not prejudice themselves by taking this notice of me. At that instant we were alarmed with a cry of the Spaniards being come; we heard many guns fired, and saw the people fly in great consternation to the fort. I felt not the least disturbance or surprise; bid the women not fear, for God was with us. In a few minutes, news was brought, that it was only a contrivance of Mr. Oglethorpe's to try the people. My charitable visitants then left me and soon returned with some gruel, which threw me into a sweat. The next morning, April 2, they ventured to call again—at night, when my fever was somewhat abated, I was led out to bury the Scout boatman, and envied him his quiet grave. April 3. I found nature endeavored to throw off the disease by excessive sweating, I therefore drank whatever the women brought me. April 4. My flux returned; but notwithstanding this, I was obliged to go abroad, and preach and administer the sacrament. My sermon, 'On keep innocency and take heed to the thing that is right, for this shall bring a man peace at the last,' was decyphered into a satire against Mrs. H. At night I got an old bedstead to sleep upon, being that on which the Scout boatman had died. April 6. I found myself so faint and weak, that it was with the utmost difficulty I got through the prayers. Mr. Davison, my good Samaritan, would often call or send his wife to attend me, and to their care, under God, I owe my life. To-day Mr. Oglethorpe gave away my bedstead from under me, and refused to spare one of the carpenters to mend me up another."

"April 10. Mr. Reed waked me with the news that my brother and Mr. Delamotte were on their way to Frederica. I found the encouragement I sought, in the Scripture for the day, Psalm lii. 'Why boastest thou thyself, thou tyrant, that thou canst do mischief, whereas the goodness of God endureth yet daily. Thy tongue imagineth wickedness, and with lies thou cuttest like a sharp razor,' &c. At six my brother and Mr. Delamotte landed, when my strength was so exhausted, that I could not have read prayers once more. He helped me into the woods, for there was no talking among a people of spies and ruffians; not even in the woods unless in an unknown tongue—And yet Mr. Oglethorpe received my brother with abundant kindness. I began my account of all that had passed, and continued it till prayers. It would be needless to mention all the Scriptures, which, for so many days, have been adapted to my circumstances. But I cannot pass by the lesson for this evening, Heb. xi. I was ashamed of having well nigh sunk under my sufferings, when I beheld the conflicts of those triumphant sufferers of whom the world was not worthy. April 11. What words could more support our confidence, than the following? out of the Psalms for the day. 'Be merciful unto me O God, for man goeth about to devour me. He is daily fighting and troubling me. Mine enemies be daily in hand to swallow me up, for they be many that fight against me—I will put my trust in God, and will not fear what flesh can do unto me. They daily mistake my words,' &c. The next Psalm was equally animating—'Be merciful unto me, O God, for my soul trusteth in thee; and under the shadow of thy wings shall be my refuge, till this tyranny be overpast. I will call unto the most high God, even unto the God that shall perform the cause that I have in hand—My soul is among lions; and I lie even among the children of men that are set on fire, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword,' &c. I just recovered strength enough to consecrate at the sacrament; my brother performed the rest. We then went out of the reach of informers, and I proceeded in my account, being fully persuaded of the truth of Mrs. W.'s information against Mr. Oglethorpe, Mrs. H. and herself. At noon my brother repeated to me his last conference with Mrs. W. in confirmation of all she had ever told me.

"April 16. My brother prevailed with me to break a resolution which honor and indignation had induced me to form, of starving rather than ask for necessaries. Accordingly I went to Mr. Oglethorpe, and asked for some little things I wanted. He sent for me back and said, 'pray sir sit down, I have something to say to you; I hear you have spread several reports about.'

"The next day my brother and Mr. Delamotte set out in an open boat for Savannah. I preached in the afternoon, on, 'He that now goeth on his way weeping and bearing good seed, shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him.' Easter-eve,

April 24, I was sent for at 10 by Mr. Oglethrope. 'Mr. Wesley, you know what has passed between us. I took some pains to satisfy your brother about the reports concerning me, but in vain; he here renews his suspicion in writing. I did desire to convince him, because I had an esteem for him; and he is just as considerable to me as my esteem makes him. I could clear up all, but it matters not, you will soon see the reason of my actions. I am now going to death, you will see me no more. Take this ring, and carry it from me to Mr. V.; if there be a friend to be depended on he is one. His interest is next to Sir Robert's; whatever you ask, within his power, he will do for you, your brother and family. I have expected death for some days. These letters show that the Spaniards have long been seducing our allies, and intend to cut us off at a blow. I fall by my friends, on whom I depended to send their promised succors. But death is nothing to me; I will pursue all my designs, and to Him I recommend them and you.' He then gave me a diamond ring; I took it, and said, 'If, *postremum fato quod te alloquor, hoc est,** hear, what you will quickly know to be a truth as soon as you are entered on a separate state; this ring I shall never make any use of for myself; I have no worldly hopes, I have renounced the world—Life is bitterness to me—I came hither to lay it down—You have been deceived as well as I—I protest my innocence of the crimes I am charged with, and think myself now at liberty to tell you what I thought never to have uttered.'" It is probable that he unfolded to Mr. Oglethorpe the whole plot, as Mrs. W. had discovered it to him.

"When I had finished this relation he seemed entirely changed; full of his old love and confidence in me. After some expressions of kindness, I asked him, 'are you now satisfied?' He replied, 'Yes entirely.' 'Why then, sir, I desire nothing more on earth, and care not how soon I follow you.' He added, how much he desired the conversion of the heathen, and believed my brother intended for it. 'But I believe,' said I, 'it will never be under your patronage; for then men would account for it, without taking God into the account.' He replied, 'I believe so too'—Then embraced and kissed me with the most cordial affection. I attended him to the Scout boat, where he waited some minutes for his sword. They brought a mourning sword the first and a second time; at last they gave him his own, which had been his father's—'With this sword,' said he, 'I was never yet unsuccessful.' When the boat put off, I ran into the woods to see my last of him. Seeing me and two others run after him, he stopt the boat and asked if we wanted anything? Capt. Mackintosh, whom he left commander, desired his last orders. I then said, 'God is with you; go forth, *Christo duce, et auspice Christo.*' 'You have,' said he, 'some verses of mine, you there see my thoughts of success.' The

* This be the last time I am allowed to speak to you.

boat then carried him out of sight—I interceded for him, that God would save him from death, and wash away all his sins."

"April 29. About half past 8, I went down to the bluff, to see a boat that was coming up. At 9 it arrived, with Mr. Oglethorpe. I blessed God for still holding his soul in life. In the evening we took a walk together, and he informed me more particularly of our past danger. Three large ships and four smaller, had been seen for three weeks together at the mouth of the river; but the wind continuing against them, they were hindered from making a descent until they could stay no longer. I gave him back his ring, and said, 'I need not, indeed I cannot, sir, tell you how joyfully and thankfully I return this.' 'When I gave it you,' said he, 'I never expected to receive it again, but thought it would be of service to your brother and you. I had many omens of my death—but God has been pleased to preserve a life which was never valuable to me, and yet in the continuance of it, I thank God I can rejoice.' He appeared full of tenderness to me; and passed on to observe the strangeness of his deliverance, when betrayed on all sides, without human support, and utterly helpless. He condemned himself for his late anger, which he imputed to want of time for consideration. 'I longed, sir,' said I, 'to see you once more, that I might tell you some things before we finally parted. But then I considered, that if you died, you would know them all in a moment.' 'I know not,' said he, 'whether separate spirits regard our little concerns; if they do, it is as men regard the follies of their childhood; or, as I my late passionateness.' April 30. I had some further talk with him; he ordered me every thing he could think I wanted; and promised to have an house built for me immediately. He was just the same to me, he formerly had been."

From a careful examination of the whole of this affair, it appears to me that Mr. Wesley's conduct is not only free from blame, but that his integrity and prudence deserve the highest commendation. Conscious of his innocence, and loaded with contempt and reproach under the most irritating and provoking circumstances, his patience, and confidence in God, in expectation of deliverance, stand forth in a conspicuous light, and form the most prominent features of his character. Mrs. H. and Mrs. W. were women of very loose morals; they had come from England in the ship with Mr. Oglethorpe, and while at sea, Mrs. W. seemed to be under some religious impressions, but soon lost them on shore. The character of Mrs. H. was well known in England; Mr. Charles Wesley was informed by Mr. Hird, that Mr. Oglethorpe declared he would rather give an hundred pounds than take her in the ship. Though Mr. Wesley knew this, and the whole of her character, yet he never upbraided her with it, but patiently endured her revilings. His innocence appears on the very face of their proceedings, and hence Mr. Oglethorpe, when undeceived, attributed his conduct to a want of time for consideration. The second

day after his coming among them, Mrs. H. began to abuse him; and seven days after, their whole plot was discovered to him; which makes it almost certain that their designs were formed before he came among them, under an apprehension that he would be too great a check on their licentious behavior. After such an instance as this, of the principles and practices of this people, ought we to wonder at any reports they might raise concerning either of the two brothers?

Mr. Charles Wesley being now more at ease from his persecutors, gradually regained his strength; and on the 11th of May he was sufficiently recovered to expound the lesson. On the 12th, the morning lesson was, Elisha surrounded with the host of Dothan. "It is our privilege as Christians," Mr. Wesley observes, "to apply these words to ourselves, 'there be more that be for us, than those that be against us.' God spoke to us yet plainer in the second lesson—'Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves.—But beware of men, for they will deliver you up, and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my name's sake; and ye shall be hated of all men; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.—The disciple is not above his master; fear ye not therefore, for there is nothing covered which shall not be revealed, and hid which shall not be made known.' In explaining this," he adds, "I dwelt on that blessed topic of consolation to the innocent, that however he may suffer here, he will shortly be cleared at God's righteous bar, where the accuser and the accused shall meet face to face, and the guilty person acquit him whom he unjustly charged, and take back the wickedness to himself. Poor Mrs. W. who was just over against me, could not stand it, but first turned her back, and then retired behind the congregation." No one would have rejoiced more in her repentance and conversion to God, than Mr. Wesley.

May 13. Mr. Oglethorpe being gone to the southward, Mr. Charles Wesley set out for Savannah, whither the Indian traders were coming down to meet him, in order to take out their licenses. On the 16th, he reached Thunderbolt at six in the evening, and from thence walked to Savannah,* which is about five miles. His brother, Mr. Ingham, and Mr. Delamotte were surprised at his unexpected visit; but it being late, each retired to his corner of the room, and "without the help of a bed," says Mr. Charles, "we slept soundly till the morning." On the 19th, Mr. John Wesley set out for Frederica, and Mr. Charles took charge of Savannah in his absence. "The hardest duty," says he, "imposed on me, was expounding the lesson morning and evening to ONE HUNDRED hearers. I was surprised at my own confidence, and acknowledged it was not my own." The day was usually divided between visiting his parishioners, considering the lesson, and conversing with Mr. Ingham, Delamotte, &c. On the 22d he first met the traders at Mr. Causton's, and continued to meet some or other of them every day for several weeks.

* This accords with Mr. John Wesley's Journal. See his Works, vol. xxvi. p. 130.

May 31. Mr. Oglethorpe being returned from the southward, and come to Savannah, he this day held a court. "We went," says Mr. Wesley, "and heard his speech to the people;" in the close of which he said, "If any one here has been abused, or oppressed by any man, in or out of office, he has free and full liberty of complaining: let him deliver in his complaints in writing at my house: I will read them all over by myself and do every particular man justice." "At eight in the evening I waited upon him, and found the three magistrates with him, who seemed much alarmed by his speech—'they hoped he would not discourage government.'—He dismissed them." We have here a curious specimen of the notions which the magistrates of Savannah had of government. They seem to have thought it their privilege, as governors, to oppress any individual without restraint, as it suited their convenience or inclination. I am sorry to say, that we too often see this notion of government manifest itself in the conduct of little petty governors, both in matters ecclesiastical and civil.

In the beginning of July, I find Mr. Oglethorpe, Mr. John and Mr. Charles Wesley, all at Savannah: but there is no intimation how long they had been there, or on what occasion they were together. "On the 21st," says Mr. Charles, "I heard by my brother, that I was to set sail for England in a few days." This was not merely on account of his health, which was now a little recovered. He was to carry despatches from Mr. Oglethorpe to the Trustees of Georgia, to the Board of Trade, and probably to Government. The next day, July 22, he got all the licenses signed by Mr. Oglethorpe, and countersigned them himself, "and so," says he, "I entirely washed my hands of the traders." This seems to have been a business which he cordially disliked; and thinking the present a favorable opportunity of escaping from his disagreeable situation, he wrote a letter to Mr. Oglethorpe on the 25th, resigning his office of Secretary. In the evening Mr. Oglethorpe took him aside, and asked whether the sum of all he had said in the letter was not contained in the following line, which he showed him,

"*Magis apta Tuis, tua dona relinquo.*'

"Sir, to yourself your slighted gifts I leave,
Less fit for me to take, than you to give."

"Sir," said Mr. Wesley, "I do not wish to lose your esteem, but I cannot lose my soul to preserve it." He answered, "I am satisfied of your regard for me; and your argument drawn from the heart is unanswerable; yet I would desire you not to let the Trustees know your resolution of resigning. There are many hungry fellows ready to catch at the office, and in my absence I cannot put in one of my own choosing. Perhaps they may send me a bad man; and how far such a one may influence the traders, and obstruct the reception of the Gospel among the heathen, you know.—I shall be in England

before you hear of it, and then you may either put in a deputy or resign."

July 26. Mr. C. Wesley set out for Charles-Town on his way to England. Thus far his brother accompanied him; and here they arrived on the 31st of July.* He now found his desires renewed to recover the image of God; and at the Sacrament was encouraged, in an unusual manner, to hope for pardon, and to strive against sin.

In every place where he came, Mr. Wesley was attentive to the things which passed round about him. We cannot therefore wonder that the wretched situation of the negroes should attract his notice. "I have observed much, and heard more," says he, "of the cruelty of masters towards their negroes; but now I received an authentic account of some horrid instances thereof. I saw myself, that the giving a slave to a child of its own age, to tyrannize over, to abuse and beat out of sport, was a common practice: nor is it strange, that being thus trained up in cruelty, they should afterwards arrive at such a perfection in it."

Mr. Wesley mentions several methods of torturing the poor slaves that were common, and even talked of with indifference by some who practised them—For instance, Mr. Starr informed Mr. L., with whom Mr. Wesley was intimate, that he had ordered a slave, first to be nailed up by the ears, and then to be whipt in the severest manner; and to finish the whole, to have scalding water thrown all over his body; after which the poor creature could not move himself for four months.

"Another, much applauded punishment," says Mr. C. Wesley, "is, drawing the teeth of their slaves—It is universally known, that Colonel Linch cut off the legs of a poor negro, and that he kills several of them every year by his barbarities."

"It were endless to recount all the shocking instances of diabolical cruelty, which these men, as they call themselves, daily practise upon their fellow-creatures, and that upon the most trivial occasions—I shall only mention one more, related to me by an eye-witness. Mr. Hill, a dancing-master in Charles-Town, whipt a female slave so long, that she fell down at his feet, in appearance dead: when by the help of a physician she was so far recovered as to show some signs of life, he repeated the whipping with equal rigor, and concluded the punishment with dropping scalding wax upon her flesh—Her crime was, over filling a tea-cup.—These horrid cruelties are the less to be wondered at, because the law itself, in effect, countenances and allows them to kill their slaves, by the ridiculous penalty appointed for it. —The penalty is about seven pounds sterling, one half of which is usually remitted if the criminal inform against himself."

* This account agrees with Mr. John Wesley's Journal. See his Works. Vol. xxvi. p. 145.

These instances, to which ten thousand others might be added, of deliberate, merciless cruelty, exercised by one part of mankind over another, often without any cause that can be called a provocation, show us to what a wretched state of depravity and insensibility human nature may be reduced by vicious habits. How much less would have been the sufferings of these miserable negroes, if they had fallen into the power of their *more merciful* enemies, the lions, bears, and tigers of Africa! Yet these wild beasts are hunted and destroyed as enemies to the human species: what then do the cruel slave-holders and masters deserve? who have more cruelty, and ten times the art of exercising it, even upon their own species. But what is more wonderful than all the rest, if possible, is, that in this free and enlightened country, which boasts of the mild and equitable principles of Christianity, there is a large body of men who defend the slave-trade, the source of all these miseries, and from which it can never be wholly separated. And they defend it too, on the principle of advantage. Now what is it which these men, in fact, say to us in their defence of the slave-trade? Do they not tell us, that they would reduce all other men to a state of slavery for their own advantage, if they had the power of doing it?—But I say no more: the British nation has at length awaked from its deep sleep; it has opened its eyes, and viewed the enormity of the crimes attendant on the slave-trade; it has called on the legislature to put a stop to them by abolishing it; and, for the honor of our country, the British House of Commons has condemned the trade as cruel and unjust, and has determined to abolish it. Every friend to humanity waits with impatience to see this resolution fully and effectually executed. Had the two Mr. Wesleys been now living, they would have rejoiced greatly, and have praised God, for the present prospect of a total abolition of the slave-trade.

While Mr. Wesley stayed at Charles-Town, his bloody flux and fever hung upon him, and rather increased. Notwithstanding this, he was determined to go in the first ship that sailed for England. His friends endeavored to dissuade him from it, both because the ship was very leaky, and the captain a mere beast of a man, being almost continually drunk. But he was deaf to their advice. "The public business," says he, "that hurried me to England, being of that importance, as their Secretary, I could not answer to the Trustees for Georgia, the loss of a day." Accordingly he engaged his passage on board the London Galley, which left Charles-Town on the 16th of August. But they soon found, that the captain, while on shore, had neglected every thing to which he ought to have attended. The vessel was too leaky to bear the voyage; and the captain, drinking nothing scarcely but gin, had never troubled his head about taking in a sufficient quantity of water; so that on the 26th they were obliged to be reduced to short allowance. Meeting afterwards

with stormy weather, the leak became alarming, and their difficulties increased so fast upon them, that they were obliged to steer for Boston in New England, where they arrived, with much difficulty and danger, on the 24th of September.

Mr. Wesley was soon known at Boston, and met with a hospitable reception amongst the ministers, both of the town and neighborhood. Having experienced much difficulty at Frederica, to prevent his letters to his brother from being read by others, he learned Byrom's short-hand, and now for the first time wrote to his brother in those characters. He tells him, "If you are as desirous as I am of a correspondence, you must set upon Byrom's short-hand immediately." Mr. John Wesley did so, and their correspondence was afterwards carried on chiefly in it.

This letter was evidently written in a hurry, probably in the midst of company. A part of it is in Latin, which, as it shows the facility with which he wrote in this language, and also discovers something of the turn of his mind, I shall transcribe it below.* The substance of it I shall give in English.

"*Boston, Oct.* 5.

"I am wearied with this hospitable people, they so vex and tease me with their civilities. They do not suffer me to be alone. The clergy, who come from the country on a visit, drag me along with them when they return. I am constrained to take a view of this New England, more pleasant even than the old. I cannot help exclaiming, O! happy country, that cherishes neither *flies*,† nor *crocodiles*,‡ nor *informers*.§ About the end of this week we shall certainly go on board the ship, having to pay a second time for our passage: even here, nothing is to be had without money. It vexes

* "Tœdet me populi hujusce φιλοξενε, ita me urbanitate sua divexant et persequuntur. Non patiuntur me esse solum. E rure veniunt invisentes clerici; me revertentes in rus trahunt. Cogor hanc Angliam contemplari, etiam antiqua amœniorem; et nequeo non exclamare, O fortunata regio, nec muscas alens, nec crocodilos, nec delatores! Sub fine hujus hebdomadis navem certissime conscendimus, duplicato sumptu patriam empturi. Carolinensium nemo, viatica suppeditavit; et hic itidem nil nisi cum pretio. Pessime me habet quod cogor moram hanc emere, magnumque pretium digressionis solvere."

"Morbus meus, aere hoc saluberrimo semel fugatus, iterum rediit. Suadent amici omnes, ut medicum consulem; sed "Funera non possum tam pretiosa pati."

† When Mr. Wesley was at Frederica, the sand-flies were one night so exceedingly troublesome, that he was obliged to rise at one o'clock, and smoke them out of his hut. He tells us that the whole town was employed in the same way.

‡ He means that species of the crocodile called the alligator. When at Savannah, he and Mr. Delamotte used to bathe in the Savannah river between four and five o'clock in the morning, before the alligators were stirring, but they heard them snoring all round them. One morning Mr. Delamotte was in great danger; an alligator rose just behind him, and pursued him to the land, whither he escaped with difficulty.

§ He puts informers in good company; they are always troublesome, and sometimes destructive creatures. They seldom or never confine themselves to simple facts; suspicion supplies much matter, and invention more. After what he had suffered, it is no wonder he speaks of them in so feeling a manner.

me to be obliged to purchase this delay, and to pay a great price for my departure."

"My disorder, once removed by this most salubrious air, has again returned. All my friends advise me to consult a physician, but I cannot afford so expensive a funeral."

Mr. Wesley did not go on board as he expected, the ship being detained some time longer. During his stay here, his disorder returned with violence, and reduced him to a state of very great weakness. On the 15th of October he wrote to his brother, and continues his letter in a kind of journal to the 25th, when he went on board the ship, and sailed for England. His account of himself is as follows.

"I should be glad for your sake to give a satisfactory account of myself, but that you must never expect from me—It is fine talking while we have youth and health on our side; but sickness would spoil your boasting as well as mine. I am now glad of a warm bed; but must soon betake myself to my board again."

"Though I am apt to think that I shall at length arrive in England to deliver what I am intrusted with, yet I do not expect, or wish for a long life. How strong must the principle of self-preservation be, which can make such a wretch as I am willing to live at all! —or rather unwilling to die; for I know no greater pleasure in life, than in considering that it cannot last for ever."

——— "The temptations past
No more shall vex me; every grief I feel
Shortens the destin'd number; every pulse
Beats a sharp moment of the pain away,
And the last stroke will come. By swift degrees
Time sweeps me off, and I shall soon arrive
At life's sweet period: O! Celestial point
That ends this mortal story."———

"To-day completes my three weeks' unnecessary stay at Boston. To-morrow the ship falls down—I am just now much worse than ever; but nothing less than death shall hinder me from embarking.

"October 18. The ship that carries *me*, *must* meet with endless delays: it is well if it sails this week. I have lived so long in honors and indulgences, that I have almost forgotten whereunto I am called; being strongly urged to set up my rest here. But I will lean no longer upon men; nor again put myself into the power of any of my own merciless species, by either expecting their kindness or desiring their esteem. Mr. Appy, like an errant gentleman as he is, has drawn me into monstrous expenses for ship stores, &c. So that, what with my three weeks' stay at Charles-Town, my month's stay here, and my double passage,—from courtier I am turned philosopher.*

* Among the ancients a philosopher and a beggar were almost synonymous terms. In modern times, the philosopher holds a respectable rank in society. We commonly associ-

"October 21. I am worried on all sides by the solicitations of my friends to defer my winter voyage till I have recovered a little strength. Mr. —— I am apt to think would allow me to wait a fortnight for the next ship; but then if I recover, my stay will be thought unnecessary. I must die to prove myself sick, and I can do no more at sea. I am therefore determined to be carried on board to-morrow, and leave the event to God."

"October 25. The ship fell down as was expected, but a contrary wind prevented me from following till now. At present I am something better: on board the Hannah, Captain Corney; in the state-room, which they have forced upon me. I have not strength for more. Adieu."

On the 27th, Mr. Wesley had so far recovered strength that he was able to read prayers. The next day the captain informed him that a storm was approaching. In the evening it came on with dreadful violence and raged all night. On the 29th in the morning they shipped so prodigious a sea, that it washed away their sheep, half their hogs, and drowned most of their fowl. The ship was heavy laden, and the sea streamed in so plentifully at the sides, that it was as much as four men could do by continual pumping, to keep her above water. "I rose, and lay down by turns," adds Mr. Wesley, "but could remain in no posture long. I strove vehemently to pray, but in vain; I still persisted in striving, but without effect. I prayed for power to pray,* for faith in Jesus Christ; continually repeating his name, till I felt the virtue of it at last, and knew that I abode under the shadow of the Almighty."

At three in the afternoon the storm was at the height; at four, the ship made so much water, that the captain, finding it otherwise impossible to save her from sinking, cut down the mizzen-mast. "In this dreadful moment," says Mr. Wesley, "I bless God I found the comfort of hope; and such joy in finding I could hope, as the world can neither give nor take away. I had that conviction of the power of God present with me, overbalancing my strongest passion, fear, and raising me above what I am by nature, as surpassed all rational evidence, and gave me a taste of the divine goodness."

On the 30th the storm abated; and "On Sunday the 31st," he observes, "my first business was, may it be the business of all my days, to offer up the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. We all joined in thanks for our deliverance most of the day."

They soon met with another storm, but not so violent as the former, and continuing their voyage with some intervening difficulties and dangers, till the third of December, the ship arrived opposite Deal, and the passengers came safe on shore. "I kneeled down," says Mr.

ate the ideas of a poet and a garret, but then we mean a poet by profession; one who procures a livelihood by writing verses.

* He means with confidence and comfort.

Wesley, "and blessed the hand that had conducted me through such inextricable mazes, and desired I might give up my country again, whenever God should require it."

CHAPTER VI.

SECTION III.

OF MR. CHARLES WESLEY FROM DECEMBER 3D, 1736, UNTIL THE END OF JUNE, 1738.

Mr. Charles Wesley, had been absent from England upwards of thirteen months; during this time he had passed through a series of trials and difficulties, which in all their circumstances are not very common. He had indeed been in the wilderness, where the hand of God had been manifested in his preservation, and finally in his deliverance. Here God had proved him, and tried him, and shown him what was in his heart. In this state of suffering, he was led to a more perfect knowledge of human nature, than he could have obtained from books and meditation, through the whole course of his life. His knowledge was derived from experience, which is the most certain, and the most useful in the conduct of life, and makes the deepest impression on the mind. In his distress the Scriptures became more precious than he had ever found them before. He now saw a beauty in them, which the most learned and refined criticism can never discover. From the frequent and pointed application of them to his state and circumstances, they were the means of giving a degree of consolation and hope, which human prudence and human help can never bestow. His situation abroad may be called a school, in which the discipline indeed was severe, but the knowledge acquired by it, valuable, as it prepared him to understand, and disposed him by degrees to embrace, the simple gospel way of salvation, which the pride of man hath always rejected.

Both the Mr. Wesleys had formed a large acquaintance in London among the serious professors of religion, by whom they were greatly esteemed. When Mr. Charles arrived in town, his friends received him with inexpressible joy, as one restored from the dead; a report having been spread, that the ship in which he came home, had been seen to sink at sea. He called upon one lady while she was reading an account of his death. After he had delivered his letters, he waited on their friend Mr. Charles Rivington, in St. Paul's Church-yard. Here he met with letters, and a journal from his brother in Georgia, which informed him of what had taken place, soon after he left it.

Before he finally quitted America, Mr. Charles Wesley had written a letter to his brother John, in which he had expressed his sentiments of some particular persons with freedom, but by way of caution, had pointed out two individuals by two Greek words. This letter Mr. John Wesley dropt, and it fell into the hands of those who were enemies to both of them. Mr. John Wesley was so incautious also, as to tell who were meant by the two Greek words. This was sure to raise great disturbance among a people so irritable, and so revengeful, as the Georgians were at this time. Mr. Charles had happily escaped out of their reach, and the storm fell with double violence on his brother.* The journal which he now received from Mr. Rivington, informed him of the particulars. "I read it," says Mr. Charles, "without either surprise or impatience. The dropping of my fatal letter, I hope will convince him, of what I never could, his own great carelessness: and the sufferings which it has brought upon him, may show him his blindness. His simplicity in telling, what, and who were meant by the two Greek words, was out-doing his own out-doings. Surely all this will be sufficient to teach him a little of the wisdom of the serpent, of which he seems as entirely void, as Mrs. H. is of the innocency of the dove."

Mr. Charles Wesley has given us in these remarks, a striking instance of the artless, undisguised conduct of his brother. He supposes indeed, that his brother wanted foresight; that he did not perceive the consequences which would follow from his open avowal of the whole truth. This however was far from being the case. Mr. John Wesley had too much penetration and knowledge of human nature, not to foresee what would follow from his conduct on this occasion. The truth is, that Mr. John Wesley had adopted a principle of unreserved openness in his conversation with others, which, on particular occasions he carried abundantly too far. His conduct in the present instance, may prove his sincerity, and firm attachment to his principle, but prudence cannot justify it, even on the most rigid principles of morality.

It appears from Mr. Charles Wesley's journal, that most of the Trustees for Georgia were Dissenters: they have given us an unequivocal proof that the Dissenters at this time possessed great liberality of sentiment; or they would not have approved of the nomination of the two Mr. Wesleys, men avowedly of very high Church principles, to go and preach the gospel in Georgia; especially as their father had been so public an opposer of the Dissenting interest. December the 7th, one of these trustees called on Mr. Wesley. He observes, "We had much discourse of Georgia, and of my brother's

* This was eight or nine months previous to the persecution he suffered on account of Mrs. Williamson.

persecution * among that stiff-necked people. He seems a truly pious humble Christian; full of zeal for God, and love to man." It has been generally acknowledged that Mr. Charles Wesley was a more rigid Churchman than his brother. I was therefore pleased to find this testimony of his candid judgment of a Dissenter. Could he have said more in favor of the most pious Churchman?

Mr. Oglethorpe left Georgia and set sail for England on the 26th of November, and arrived in London on the 7th of January, 1737. Mr. Charles Wesley waited upon him the next day, and the most cordial friendship subsisted between them; which continued till death.

About the middle of January, Count Zinzendorff arrived in England. I suppose it was the first time that he visited this country. One principal object of this visit, seems to have been, to procure a union between the Moravian Church, and the Church of England, in Georgia; and to get them acknowledged by this country as one church. The Count had been informed of the piety and zeal of the two brothers, and on the 19th, a few days after his arrival, he sent for Mr. Charles Wesley. He went, and the Count saluted him with all possible affection, and made him promise to call every day. Here he was acquainted with the object of the Count's visit to this country. From him he went to the bishop of Oxford, who received him with equal kindness, and desired him to call as often as he could, without ceremony or further invitation. They had much talk of the state of religion among the Moravians; of the object of the Count's visit; and the bishop acknowledged that the Moravian bishops had the true succession.

On the 25th, he paid a visit to the celebrated Dr. Hales,† near

* Occasioned by Mr. Charles Wesley's letter to his brother, just now mentioned.

† Hales (Stephen), D. D., a celebrated divine and philosopher, was born in 1677. In 1696 he was entered at Bennet College, Cambridge, and admitted a Fellow in 1703. He soon discovered a genius for natural philosophy. Botany was his first study, and he used to make excursions among the hills with a view of prosecuting it. In the study of astronomy he was equally assiduous. Having made himself acquainted with the Newtonian system, he contrived a machine for showing the phenomena of the heavenly bodies, on much the same principles with that afterwards made by Mr. Rowley, which, from the name of his patron, was called an Orrery.

In 1718, he was elected Fellow of the Royal Society: and the year following, read an account of some experiments he had lately made on the effect of the Sun's warmth in raising the sap in trees. These experiments being highly approved by the Royal Society, he was encouraged to proceed; which he did, and in 1727, published them enlarged and improved, under the title of Vegetable Statics; and in 1733, he added another volume, under the title of Statical Essays. In 1732, he was appointed one of the Trustees for establishing a new Colony in Georgia. On the 5th of July, 1733, the University of Oxford honored him with a diploma for the degree of Doctor in Divinity; a mark of distinction the more honorable, as it is not usual for one university to confer academical honors on those who were educated at another. In 1739, he printed a volume in octavo, entitled Philosophical Experiments on Sea-water, Corn, Flesh, and other substances. In 1742, he read before the Royal Society an account of an instrument he had invented called a Ventilator, for conveying fresh air into mines, hospitals, prisons, and the close parts of ships, which was used with great success, not only for these purposes, but also for preserving

Twickenham, who was one of the Trustees for Georgia. The next day they took a walk to see Mr. Pope's house and gardens; "Justly," he observes, "called a burlesque on human greatness." He adds, "I was sensibly affected with the plain Latin sentence on the Obelisk, in memory of his mother.—*Ah Editha, Matrum optima, Mulierum amantissima, vale!** How far superior to the most labored elegy which he, or Prior himself could have composed."

As Georgia was supposed to be under the jurisdiction of the bishop of London, Mr. Wesley took an early opportunity of waiting on his lordship with the Count's proposition. But the bishop refused to meddle in that business. He waited again on the bishop of Oxford, and informed him the bishop of London declined having any thing to do with Georgia, alleging that it belonged to the archbishop to unite the Moravians with the English Church. He replied that it was the bishop of London's proper office. "He bid me," adds Mr. Wesley, "assure the Count, we should acknowledge the Moravians as our brethren, and one church with us." The count seemed resolved to carry his people from Georgia, if they might not be permitted to preach to the Indians. He was very desirous to take Mr. Charles Wesley with him into Germany.

Mr. Wesley spent this year in attending on the Trustees and the Board of Trade; in visiting his friends in London, Oxford, and different parts of the country; and his brother and mother in the West of England. He preached occasionally at the places which he visited: and was every where zealous for God, and remarkably useful to a great number of persons by his religious conversation.

In August he was requested to carry up the Address from the University of Oxford, to his Majesty. Accordingly, on the 26th, he waited on the King with the address, at Hampton Court, accompanied with a few friends. They were graciously received; and the archbishop told him, he was glad to see him there. They kissed their majesties' hands, and were invited to dinner. Mr. Wesley left the dinner and the company, and hasted back to town. The next day he waited on his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and dined at St. James'.

corn sweet in granaries, &c. Many of his papers are printed in the Philosophical Transactions; and some he published, for more general usefulness, in the Gentlemen's Magazine.

Dr. Hales was several years honored with the friendship of his Royal Highness, Frederick Prince of Wales, who frequently visited him, and took a delight in surprising him in the midst of his curious researches into the various parts of Nature. The Prince dying in 1750, Dr. Hales was appointed Almoner to her Royal Highness, the Princess Dowager, without his solicitation or knowledge. In the church he held the perpetual curacy of Teddington, near Twickenham, and the living of Farringdon in Hampshire. He objected to any other preferment; for when his late Majesty nominated him to a canonry of Windsor, he engaged the Princess to prevail with his Majesty to recall his nomination. He was remarkable for benevolence, cheerfulness and temperance. He died at Teddington in 1761, in the 84th year of his age.

* Ah Editha, the best of mothers, the most loving of women, farewell!

Mr. Wesley did not experience that peace and happiness in religion, nor that renewal of his heart in holiness, which he earnestly labored to attain. He was not therefore satisfied with his present state. On the 31st of August he consulted Mr. Law; the sum of whose advice was, "Renounce yourself, and be not impatient." In the beginning of September he consulted him again, and asked several questions, to which Mr. Law gave the following answers. "With what comment shall I read the Scriptures?" "None." "What do you think of one who dies unrenewed while endeavoring after it?" "It neither concerns you to ask,* nor me to answer." "Shall I write once more to such a person?" "No." "But I am persuaded it will do him good." "Sir, I have told you my opinion." "Shall I write to you?" "Nothing I can either speak or write will do you any good."

To oblige Mr. Oglethorpe, Mr. Wesley still held his office of Secretary, and had formed a resolution to return to Georgia. About the middle of October, he was informed at the office that he must sail in three weeks. This appointment however did not take place; and his mother vehemently protested against his going back to America; but this did not alter his resolution.

In the beginning of February, 1738, Peter Bohler arrived in England, about the time Mr. John Wesley returned from Georgia. Bohler soon became acquainted with the two brothers, and on the 20th of this month prevailed with Mr. Charles Wesley to assist him in learning English. Mr. Charles was now at Oxford, and Bohler soon entered into some close conversation with him, and with some scholars who were serious. He pressed upon them the necessity of conversion; he showed them that many who had been awakened, had fallen asleep again for want of attaining to it. He spoke much of the necessity of prayer and faith, but none of them seemed to understand him.

Mr. Charles Wesley was immediately after this, taken ill of a pleurisy. On the 24th, the pain became so violent as to threaten sudden death. While in this state, Peter Bohler came to his bed-side. "I asked him," adds Mr. Wesley, "to pray for me. He seemed unwilling at first, but beginning faintly, he raised his voice by degrees, and prayed for my recovery with strange confidence. Then he took me by the hand and calmly said, 'You will not die now.' I thought within myself, I cannot hold out in this pain till morning—He said, 'Do you hope to be saved?' I answered, 'yes.' 'For what reason do you hope to be saved?' 'Because I have used my best endeavors to serve God.' He shook his head and said no more. I thought him very uncharitable, saying in my heart, 'What! are not my endeavors a sufficient ground of hope? Would he rob me of my endeavors? I have nothing else to trust to.'"

Mr. Wesley was now bled three times in about the space of twenty-

* Mr. Wesley found that he was not renewed, and thought he might die while endeavoring after it. The question therefore was to him of serious importance.

four hours; after which the disease abated, and he soon began gradually to recover his strength. As he still retained his office, and his intention of returning to Georgia with Mr. Oglethorpe, he was called upon to embark before he was perfectly recovered. The physicians absolutely forbid him to attempt the voyage, if he regarded his life. They likewise advised him, as friends, to stay at Oxford; where, being senior master in his college, he might accept of offices and preferment. His brother urged the same advice; and in compliance with it, he wrote to Mr. Oglethorpe on the 3d of April, resigning his office of Secretary. Mr. Oglethorpe was unwilling to lose him, having now had ample proof of his integrity and ability; and wrote for answer, that if he would keep his place, it should be supplied by a deputy until he could follow. But Mr. Wesley now finally relinquished his intention of going back to America.

April 24th, he was able to take a ride to Blendon, where he met with his brother and Mr. Broughton. The next day, April 25th, Mrs. Delamotte, his brother, Mr. Broughton and himself being met in their little chapel, they fell into a dispute whether conversion was gradual or instantaneous. Mr. John Wesley very positively contended for the latter,* and his assertions appeared to Mr. Charles shocking; especially when he mentioned some late instances of gross sinners being converted in a moment. Mrs. Delamotte left the room abruptly; "I staid," adds Charles, "and insisted that a man need not know when he first had faith." His brother's obstinacy, as he calls it, in maintaining the contrary opinion, at length drove him out of the room. Mr. Broughton kept his ground, not being quite so much offended as Mr. Charles Wesley.

This warm debate happened early in the morning. After dinner Mr. Broughton and Mr. John Wesley returned to London, and Mr. Charles began reading Haliburton's life to the family; one instance, and but one, he observes, of instantaneous conversion.

The next day he finished reading Haliburton's life. It produced in him great humiliation, self-abasement, and a sense of his want of that faith which brings *righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* But these effects soon passed away as a morning cloud. A degree of conviction, however, that possibly he might be wrong, had taken hold of his mind, and continued to make him uneasy. This uneasiness was increased by a return of his disorder on the 28th, when he arrived in London. Here Peter Bohler visited him again, and prayed with him. Mr. Charles Wesley now thought it was his duty to consider Bohler's doctrine, and to examine himself whether he was in the faith, and if not, never to rest till he had attained it.

* I continually follow, in the life of Mr. Charles Wesley, his own private journal, which was never published, nor intended for publication. It is pleasing to observe the agreement between this and Mr. John Wesley's printed journal, where the same circumstances are mentioned by both. See his Works, vol. xxvi. p. 261, at the bottom.

Still, however, there was a secret wish within his heart that this new doctrine, as he then thought it, might not be true; and hence arose a joy when he imagined he had found an argument against it. He soon was furnished with an argument from his own experience, which he deemed unanswerable. Having received benefit by bleeding, he was at the sacrament on the first of May, and felt a degree of peace in receiving it. "Now," said he to himself, "I have demonstration against the Moravian doctrine, that a man cannot have peace without assurance of his pardon. I now have peace, yet cannot say of a surety that my sins are forgiven." His triumph was very short: his peace immediately left him, and he sunk into greater doubts and distress than before. He now began to be convinced that he had not that faith which puts the true believer in possession of the benefits and privileges of the gospel. For some days following he had a faint desire to attain it, and prayed for it. He then began to speak of the necessity of this faith to his friends; his earnestness to attain it increased, and he determined not to rest till he had the happy experience of it in himself.

Soon afterwards Mr. Broughton called upon him at the house of Mr. Bray. The subject was presently introduced. Mr. Broughton said, "As for you, Mr. Bray, I hope you are still in your senses, and not run mad after a faith that must be felt." He continued contradicting this doctrine of faith, till he roused Mr. Wesley to defend it, and to confess his want of faith. "God help you, poor man," said Broughton, "if I could think that you have not faith, I am sure it would drive me to despair." Mr. Wesley then assured him, he was as certain that he had not the faith of the gospel, as he was that he hoped for it, and for salvation.

It is commonly said, that passion and prejudice blind the mind. We should rather say, they give the understanding a false view of objects, by changing the *media* through which it sees them. Mr. Broughton was a man of learning, had been a member of their little society at Oxford, and was well disposed to religion. He viewed the notion of faith which the two brothers had now embraced, through the medium of prejudice, and his understanding was confused and his judgment perverted. He seemed to think, that he could not place the absurdity of their notion in a stronger light, than by saying, this faith must be felt. He thought a man must be out of his senses before he can persuade himself that he must feel that he has faith. As if it were possible for a man to believe a proposition, whatever it may be, and not be conscious that he believes it: or to have doubts, and be totally unconscious and ignorant of them; the impossibility of which is evident.

Mr. Charles Wesley now saw, that the gospel promises to man a knowledge of God reconciled in Christ Jesus, which he had not attained; that a person prepared to receive it as he was by knowing

his want of it, must attain it by clear views of Christ, and a living faith in him: and he became more and more earnest in pursuit of it. On the 12th of May he waked in the morning, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, even the righteousness which is of God by faith. He read Isaiah, and saw, that unto him were the promises made. He now spent the whole of his time in discoursing on faith, either with those who had it, or with those who sought it; and in reading the Scriptures and prayer.

On this day Mr. Wesley observes, that he was much affected at the sight of old Mr. Ainsworth; a man of great learning, and near eighty years of age. "Like old Simeon, he was waiting to see the Lord's salvation, that he might die in peace. His tears, his vehemency, and child-like simplicity, showed him upon the entrance of the kingdom of heaven." Mr. Ainsworth* seems to have been fully convinced of the true doctrines of the gospel, and to have joined himself to this little company who were endeavoring to know and serve God as the gospel directs. Mr. Wesley mentions him afterwards, with great admiration of his simplicity and child-like disposition.

May 17th, Mr. Wesley first saw Luther on the Galatians, which Mr. Holland had accidentally met with. They immediately began to read him; "And my friend," adds Mr. Wesley, "was so affected in hearing him read, that he breathed sighs and groans unutterable. I marvelled that we were so soon and entirely removed from him that called us into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel. Who would believe that our church had been founded on this important article of justification by faith alone? I am astonished I should ever think this a new doctrine; especially while our articles and homilies stand unrepealed, and the key of knowledge is not yet taken away. From this time I endeavored to ground as many of our friends as came to see me, in this fundamental truth.—Salvation by faith alone—not an idle, dead faith, but a faith which works by love, and is incessantly productive of all good works and all holiness."

May the 19th, a Mrs. Turner called upon him, who professed faith in Christ. Mr. Wesley asked her several questions; to which she returned the following answers. Has God bestowed faith upon you? "Yes, he has." Why, have you peace with God? "Yes, perfect peace." And do you love Christ above all things? "I do, above all things." Then you are willing to die. "I am, and would be glad to die this moment; for I know that all my sins are blotted out; the

* This is a most pleasing anecdote of a man of so much reading and study as Mr. Robert Ainsworth. It shows the great goodness of his mind, which was not puffed up with extensive knowledge, acquired by long industry; nor with the labors of many years, successfully employed for the promotion of literature and the honor of his country. He was born in Lancashire, in 1660; and was master of a boarding-school at Bethnal-Green, from whence he removed to Hackney.—After acquiring a moderate fortune, he retired and lived privately. We are indebted to him for the best Latin and English Dictionary extant. He died in 1743.

hand-writing that was against me, is taken out of the way, and nailed to the cross. He has saved me by his death; he has washed me in his blood; I have peace in him, and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."—Mr. Wesley adds, "Her answers were so full to these and the most searching questions I could ask, that I had no doubt of her having received the atonement; and waited for it myself with more assured hope, feeling an anticipation of joy on her account."

Religious conversation, especially when it is a simple, artless relation of genuine experience, is often of singular use. Christian experience implies a consciousness which a man has in himself, that he lives in the possession of certain spiritual benefits and privileges, which the gospel promises to those who cordially embrace it, and in hope of others which he has not yet attained. Mr. Wesley experienced great humiliation and self-abasement; he was fully conscious of his own helplessness and total inability to reconcile himself to God, or to make atonement for the least of his sins, by the best endeavors to serve him. His whole hope, therefore, of pardon and salvation was in Christ, by attaining those benefits which the Holy Jesus, by the whole process of redemption, had procured for him. He had already been the means of awakening several persons to a sense of their sinfulness and danger, by describing the state of his own mind, and showing them the evidences on which his convictions of sin were founded. And he also was both instructed and encouraged by hearing the experience of those who had attained that knowledge of Christ, and of the power of his resurrection, which he was now earnestly seeking. The practice of thus conversing together on experience, is peculiar to Christians; Christianity being the only religion that was ever published to the world, which leads man to an intercourse and fellowship with God in spiritual things. It is pleasing to observe, that those who associated together, at the very commencement of this revival of religion, immediately fell into this most excellent method of building one another up in their most holy faith. Their daily conversation became a powerful means of keeping their minds watchful against sin, and diligent and zealous in pursuit of holiness; it tended to give consolation, to increase patience under affliction, and to strengthen their confidence of deliverance and victory in God's own time. I believe this method of religious improvement has been more universally and constantly attended to among the Methodists, than among any other class of people professing religion. In this, I apprehend, they have very much resembled the Primitive Christians, as long as these retained their first zeal and simplicity, which probably was till towards the latter end of the second century, and in some places much later. What a pity that any denomination of Christians, the Methodists in particular, should ever lose this characteristic of the followers of Christ.

When persons began to relate their experience in religion, at the period of which I am now speaking, it appeared to many as a new thing in England. The phrases they made use of, had not as yet been learned by heart; they were the genuine expressions of what had passed in their own hearts, and therefore signified something fixed and determinate, which all who experienced the same things, or their want of them, would easily understand; though to others they would appear, as they do now, mere cant phrases, without any determinate ideas affixed to them. Mr. Wesley's knowledge of himself, and conscious want of peace with God, on a foundation which cannot be shaken, furnished him with a key which opened their true meaning. He saw the gospel contained ample provisions for all his wants, and that its operation on the mind is admirably adapted to the human faculties. He perceived, that, however learning might assist him in judging of his experience, and in regulating the means of retaining and increasing it; yet experience is distinct both from learning and mere speculative opinion, and may be, and often is, separated from them. He was therefore convinced, that all his learning could neither give him an experimental knowledge of Christ, nor supply the place of it; and he saw several persons, who had no pretensions to learning, rejoicing in it; which made him willing to be taught, in matters of experience, by the illiterate. He now lost the pride of literature, and sought the kingdom of heaven as a little child: he counted all things as dung and dross in comparison of it; and all his thoughts, his desires, his hopes and his fears, had some relation to it. But God did not leave him long in this state. On Whitsunday, May 21st, he waked in hope and expectation of soon attaining the object of his wishes, the knowledge of God reconciled in Christ Jesus. At nine o'clock his brother and some friends came to him, and sung a hymn suited to the day. When they left him he betook himself to prayer. Soon afterwards a person came and said, in a very solemn manner, "believe in the name of Jesus of Nazareth and thou shalt be healed of all thine infirmities." The words went through his heart, and animated him with confidence. He looked into the Scripture, and read, "Now Lord, what is my hope? truly my hope is even in thee." He then cast his eye on these words, "He hath put a new song into my mouth, even thanksgiving unto our God; many shall see it and fear, and put their trust in the Lord." Afterwards he opened upon Isaiah xl. 1. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith our God, speak comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." In reading these passages of Scripture, he was enabled to view Christ as set forth to be a propitiation for his sins, through faith in his blood, and received that peace and rest in God, which he had so earnestly sought.

The next morning he waked with a sense of the divine goodness and protection, and rejoiced in reading the 107th Psalm, so nobly descriptive, he observes, of what God had done for his soul. This day he had a very humbling view of his own weakness; but was enabled to contemplate Christ in his power to save to the uttermost, all those who come unto God by him. Many evil thoughts were suggested to his mind, but they immediately vanished away. In the afternoon he was greatly strengthened by those words in the 43d of Isaiah, which he saw were spoken to encourage and comfort the true Israel of God, in every age of his church. "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy one of Israel, thy Saviour."

Mr. Wesley had long been well acquainted with the Scriptures; he had now an enlarged and distinct view of the doctrines of the gospel; and experienced in himself the blessings it promiseth to those who cordially embrace them. A man thus qualified to instruct others, will find many occasions of prayer and praise, which will suggest matter adapted to particular persons and circumstances. If he be a man of tolerable good sense and some vigor of thought, and especially if he have had a liberal education, he will never want words to express the ideas and feelings of his own mind. Such a person will therefore often find a prescribed form of prayer to be a restraint upon the exercise of his own powers, under circumstances which become powerful incentives to an animated and vigorous exercise of them; and by varying from the words and matter suggested by the occasion, it will often throw a damp on the ardor of his soul, and in some degree obstruct the profit of his devotion. We may observe likewise, that a form of prayer becomes familiar by frequent repetition; and, according to a well-known principle in human nature, the more familiar an object, or a form of words become, the less effect they have on the mind, and the difficulty is increased of fixing the attention sufficiently to feel the full effect which otherwise they would produce. Hence it is, that we find the most solemn forms of prayer, in frequent use, are often repeated by rote, without the least attention to the meaning and importance of the words, unless a person be under some affliction, which disposes him to feel their application to himself. Extempore prayer has therefore a great advantage over set forms, in awakening and keeping up the attention of an audience. Whether Mr. Wesley had reasoned thus on forms of prayer, I cannot say; but he evidently found them, at this time, to be a restraint on the freedom of his devotional exercises, and now began to pray occasionally

without a form, with advantage and comfort to himself and others. It was however a new practice with him, and he seemed surprised both at his boldness and readiness in performing it, and hence he says, "Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name be the glory."

Both the Mr. Wesleys were greatly censured by some persons, particularly by their brother Samuel, when they began this practice. I cannot see any cause for censure. The most sensible and moderate men have allowed, that a form of prayer may be useful to some particular persons in private; and that it may be proper on some occasions in public worship. But the more zealous advocates for forms of prayer are not satisfied with this; they wish to bind them upon all persons, as a universal rule of prayer in public worship, from which we ought in no instance to depart. This appears to me unjustifiable on any ground whatever. To say that we shall not ask a favor of God, nor return him thanks; that we shall hold no intercourse with him in our public assemblies, but in a set of words dictated to us by others, is an assumption of power in sacred things, which is not warranted either by Scripture or reason: it seems altogether as improper as to confine our intercourse with one another to prescribed forms of conversation. Were this restraint imposed upon us, we should immediately feel the hardship, and see the impropriety of it; and the one appears to me as ill adapted to edification and comfort, as the other would be.

This day an old friend called upon him, under great apprehensions that he was running mad. His fears were not a little increased, when he heard him speak of some instances of the power and goodness of God. His friend told him that he expected to see rays of light round his head; and said a good deal more in the same strain. Finding by Mr. Wesley's conversation that he was past recovery, he begged him to fly from London, and took his leave in despair of doing him any good.

May 23d, he wrote an hymn on his own conversion. Upon showing it to Mr. Bray a thought was suggested to his mind, that he had done wrong and displeased God. His heart immediately sunk within him; but the shock lasted only for a moment; "I clearly discerned," says he, "it was a device of the enemy to keep glory from God. It is most usual with him to preach humility when speaking would endanger his kingdom and do honor to Christ. Least of all would he have us tell what God has done for our souls, so tenderly does he guard us against pride. But God has showed me, that he can defend me from it while speaking for him. In his name therefore, and through his strength, I will perform my vows unto the Lord, of not hiding his righteousness within my heart."

Mr. Wesley had now satisfactory evidence that he was a pardoned sinner, accepted of God in Christ Jesus, and quickened by his spirit.

He enjoyed constant peace, was extremely watchful over the motions of his own heart, and had a degree of strength to resist temptation, and to do the will of God, which he had not found before his justification; but he felt no great emotion of mind, or transport of joy in any of the means of grace. He now intended to receive the sacrament, and was fearful lest he should be as flat and comfortless in this ordinance as formerly; he received it without any very sensible effect on his mind more than usual, but with this difference from his former state, that he found himself, after it was over, calm and satisfied with the goodness of God to his soul, and free from doubt, fear or scruple, of his interest in Christ. In this way he was early taught by experience, to place little confidence in any of those sudden and transient impressions which are often made on the mind in public or private acts of devotion. Nor was he uneasy because destitute of that rapturous joy which some persons have experienced; he was thankful for the more calm and more permanent operations of divine grace on the mind, by which his heart was kept in peace, staid upon God, and watching unto prayer.

May 28. He rose in great heaviness, which neither private nor joint prayer with others could remove. At last he betook himself to intercession for his relations, and was greatly enlarged therein, particularly for a most profligate sinner. He spent the morning with James Hutton, in prayer, singing and rejoicing. In the afternoon his brother came, and after prayer for success on their ministry, Mr. John Wesley set out intending to go to Tiverton, and Mr. Charles began writing his first sermon after his conversion, "In the name of Christ his prophet."

He had before this time been the means of leading several persons to a knowledge of themselves, and to a sense of their want of faith in Christ: he was now the instrument in the hands of God of bringing one to an experimental knowledge of salvation by the remission of sin, so that she rejoiced in God her Saviour. A severe exercise of faith and patience soon followed. June the 1st, he found his mind so exceedingly dull and heavy that he had scarcely any power to pray. This state increased upon him for several days, till at length he became insensible of any comfort, or of any impression of good upon his mind in the means of grace. He was averse to prayer, and though he had but just recovered strength sufficient to go to church, yet he almost resolved not to go at all: when he did go, the prayers and sacrament were a grievous burden to him: instead of a fruitful field, he found the whole service a dreary barren wilderness, destitute of comfort and profit. He felt what he calls, "A cowardly desire of death," to escape from his present painful feelings. He began to examine himself, and to enquire wherein his present state differed from the state he was in before he professed faith. He soon found there was a difference in the following particulars; he observed the

present darkness was not like the former; there was no guilt in it; he was persuaded God would remove it in his own time; and he was confident of the love and mercy of God to him in Christ Jesus.—The former state was night, the present only a cloudy day; at length the cloud dispersed, and the Sun of righteousness again shone with brightness on his soul.

This was a most instructive exercise. It showed him, 1. His own utter helplessness in the work of his salvation. He found by experience that he could not produce comfort or any religious affection in himself when he most wanted them. The work is God's; when he gives light and strength, man may work, and he is required to work out his salvation with fear and trembling; but till God begin the work, man cannot move a step in it. 2. It taught him to value the gifts of God which nothing can purchase; and to guard them as his treasure, and not barter them for the goods of this life. 3. He saw hereby, that if he could not produce comfort and religious affections in himself, he was still less able to produce them in others, and therefore, whenever they were experienced under his ministry, the work was God's, he was only the mean humble instrument in his hand. Thus God prepared him for great usefulness and guarded him against pride. When the trial was over, he saw the excellent fruits of it, and thanked God that it continued so long.

June the 7th, Dr. Byrom* called upon him. Mr. Wesley had a hard struggle with his bashfulness before he could prevail on himself to speak freely to the doctor on the things of God. At length he gave him a simple relation of his own experience: this brought on a full explanation of the doctrine of faith, which Dr. Byrom received with wonderful readiness.

Mr. Wesley having recovered strength, began to move about among his friends. He went to Blendon, and to some other places in the country, and found, that the more he labored in the work of the ministry, the more his joy and happiness in God was increased. He was remarkably diligent, zealous, and successful wherever he went, seldom staying a night or two in any place, but several persons were convinced of the truth and converted to God. In this journey he met with the Rev. Mr. Piers, and on the 9th of this month, in riding to Bexley, spake to him of his own experience, with great simplicity,

* John Byrom, an ingenious poet of Manchester, was born in 1691. His first poetical essay appeared in the Spectator, No. 603, beginning, "My time, O ye Muses, was happily spent;" which, with two humorous letters on dreams, are to be found in the eighth volume. He was admitted a member of the Royal Society in 1724. Having originally entertained thoughts of practising physic, he received the appellation of Doctor, by which he was always known; but reducing himself to narrow circumstances by a precipitate marriage, he supported himself by teaching a new method of writing Short-hand, of his own invention; until an estate devolved to him by the death of an elder brother. He was a man of ready, lively wit, of which he gave many humorous specimens, whenever a favorable opportunity tempted him to indulge his disposition. He died in 1763; and a collection of his Miscellaneous Poems was printed at Manchester, in two volumes octavo, 1773.

but with confidence. He found Mr. Piers ready to receive the faith. Greatest part of the day was spent in the same manner, Mr. Bray, who was with Mr. Wesley, relating the dealings of God with his own soul, and showing what great things God had done for their friends in London. Mr. Piers listened with eager attention to all that was said, made not the least objection, but confessed that these were things which he had never experienced. They then walked and sung, and prayed in the garden: he was greatly affected, and testified his full conviction of the truth, and desire of finding Christ. "But," said he, "I must first prepare myself by long exercise of prayer and good works."

The day before Mr. Wesley and Mr. Bray arrived at Blendon, Mr. Piers had been led to read the homily on justification, by which he was convinced that in him, by nature, dwelt no good thing. This prepared him to receive what these messengers of peace related, concerning their own experience. He now saw that all the thoughts of his heart were evil, and that continually, forasmuch as whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

June the 10th. He became earnest for present salvation; he prayed to God for comfort, and was encouraged by reading Luke v. 23. "Whether is it easier to say, thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, rise up and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy) I say unto thee arise, and take up thy bed and go unto thine house," &c. Mr. Wesley and Mr. Bray now conversed with him on the power of Christ to save, and then prayed with him; they afterwards read the 65th Psalm, and all of them were animated with hope in reading, "Thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and receivest unto thyself; he shall dwell in thy court, and shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of thy house, even of thy holy temple. Thou shalt show us wonderful things in thy righteousness, O God of our salvation! Thou art the hope of all the ends of the earth," &c. In the continuance of these exercises alternately, of conversing, reading, and praying together, Mr. Piers received power to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and had peace and joy in believing.

The next day Mr. Piers preached on death: and in hearing him, Mr. Wesley observes, "I found great joy in feeling myself willing, or rather desirous to die." This however did not proceed from impatience, or a fear of the afflictions and sufferings of life, but from a clear evidence of his acceptance in the beloved. After sermon they went to the house of Mr. Piers, and joined in prayer for a poor woman in deep despair: then going down to her, Mr. Wesley asked whether she thought God was love, and not anger, as Satan would persuade her? He showed her the gospel plan of salvation; a plan founded in mercy and love to lost perishing sinners. She received what he said

with all imaginable eagerness. When they had continued some time together in prayer for her, she rose up a new creature, strongly and explicitly declaring her faith in the blood of Christ, and full persuasion that she was accepted in him.

Mr. Wesley remained weak in body, but grew stronger daily in faith, and more zealous for God and the salvation of men, great power accompanying his exhortations and prayers. On the evening of this day, after family prayer, he expounded the lesson, and one of the servants testified her faith in Christ and peace with God. A short time afterwards the gardener was made a happy partaker of the same blessings. Mr. Piers also began to see the fruit of his ministerial labors. Being sent for to visit a dying woman in despair, because she had done so little good, and so much evil; he declared to her the glad tidings of salvation by grace, and showed her, that if she could sincerely repent and receive Christ by a living faith, God would pardon her sins and receive her graciously. This opened to her view a solid ground of comfort; she gladly quitted all confidence in herself, to trust in Jesus Christ, and she experienced her faith in him by a calm, cheerful, triumphant expectation of death. Her fears and agonies were at an end; being justified by faith she had peace with God, and only entered farther into her rest, by dying a few hours after. The spectators of this awful joyful scene, were melted into tears, while she calmly passed into the heavenly Canaan, and brought up a good report of her faithful pastor, who under Christ saved her soul from death.

The next day, June the 14th, Mr. Wesley returned to London, and was informed that his brother, Mr. John Wesley, was gone to Hernhuth. The news, he observes, surprised, but did not disquiet him. He staid only two days in London, and then returned with J. Delamotte to Blendon, and from thence to Bexley. Here his complaints returned upon him, and he was obliged to keep his bed. "Desires of death," says he, "often rose in me, which I labored to check, not daring to form any wish concerning it." His pains abated; and on the 21st, I find him complaining, that several days had elapsed and he had done nothing for God; so earnestly did he desire to be incessantly laboring in the work of the ministry.

In this excursion Mr. Wesley was very successful in doing good; but he met with strong opposition to the doctrine of justification by faith alone, from William Delamotte, whom he calls his scholar, and from Mrs. Delamotte, who was still more violent against it than her son; both were zealous defenders of the merit of good works. Mr. Delamotte supposed, that if men were justified by faith alone, without any regard to works, then sinners obtaining this justification, and dying soon after, would be equal in heaven with those who had labored many years in doing good and serving God. But, said he, "It would be unjust in God to make sinners equal with us, who have

labored many years." The Jews of old reasoned in a similar manner concerning the reception of the Gentiles into the gospel church, on the same conditions and to the same privileges with themselves. Their disposition towards the Gentiles is beautifully described, and gently reproved, in the parable of the prodigal son. The cases indeed are not perfectly similar; the one relating to our state in heaven, the other to the blessings and privileges of the gospel in this life. Mr. Delamotte's conclusion, however, does not follow from the doctrine of justification by faith. As all men have sinned, so all men must be justified, or pardoned, and be admitted to a participation of gospel blessings, as an act of mere grace or favor; and the condition required of man, is, faith alone; but it is such a faith as becomes a practical principle of obedience to every part of the gospel, so far as a man understands it. Thus far all men, who hear the gospel, are equal; they must be pardoned and accepted by an act of grace or favor, and the same condition of receiving these blessings is required of every man, without any regard to his works, which are all sinful. Our state in heaven will be regulated by a different rule. All who are saved, will not be treated as equal: "Every man will be rewarded according to his works;" that is, according to his improvement in practical holiness, on gospel principles. Heaven will undoubtedly be a state of society; this appears evident, not only from some passages of Scripture, but from the faculties of men, which are formed for social intercourse, in order to obtain the highest degree of happiness. But in a state of society, the members occupy different ranks and degrees; there are certain honors and rewards to be bestowed: in heaven these will all be distributed in proportion to our works, and the conformity to Christ, to which we may attain in this life.

Mr. Delamotte, however, thought his conclusion good, and was animated with zeal against this new faith, as it was then commonly called. He collected his strong reasons against it, and filled two sheets of paper with them: but in searching the Scripture for passages to strengthen his arguments, he met with Titus iii. 5. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us." This passage of Scripture cut him to the heart, destroyed all confidence in the specious reasoning he had used on this subject, and convinced him he was wrong. He burned his papers, and began to seek in earnest that faith which he had before opposed.

Mrs. Delamotte continued her opposition. In reading a sermon, one evening in the family, Mr. Wesley maintained the doctrine of faith: Mrs. Delamotte opposed. "Madam," said Mr. Wesley, "we cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard: I received faith in that manner, and so have more than thirty others in my presence." Her passion kindled; said she could not bear this, and hastily quitted the room.—Mr. Wesley here gives us some idea of his success in

conversing and praying with the people. A month had now elapsed since his justification. A part of this time he had been confined by sickness, and was not yet able to preach. Notwithstanding this, more than thirty persons had been justified in the little meetings at which he had been present! Mrs. Delamotte was afterwards convinced of the truth, and cordially embraced it.

June the 30th, Mr. Wesley received the following letter from Mr. William Delamotte.

"Dear Sir,

"God hath heard your prayers. Yesterday about twelve, he put his *fiat* to the desires of his distressed servant; and glory be to him, I have enjoyed the fruits of his holy Spirit ever since. The only uneasiness I feel, is, want of thankfulness and love for so unspeakable a gift. But I am confident of this also, that the same gracious hand which hath communicated, will communicate even unto the end.—O my dear friend, I am free indeed! I agonized some time between darkness and light; but God was greater than my heart, and burst the cloud, and broke down the partition wall, and opened to me the door of faith."

CHAPTER VI.

SECTION IV.

CONTAINING SOME ACCOUNT OF MR. CHARLES WESLEY'S PUBLIC MINISTRY.

If we consider how necessary the gospel is, to the present and future happiness of men, we shall readily acknowledge that a minister of it, occupies the most important office in society; and hence it becomes a matter of the utmost importance, that this office be filled with men properly qualified for it. Christianity is a practical science, the theory of its principles being only preparatory to the practice of those duties which it enjoins. A preacher therefore should not only understand the doctrines of the gospel, and be able to arrange them according to the natural order in which they are intended to influence the mind, and direct the conduct of life; but he ought to experience their influenee on his own heart, and be daily conversant in a practical application of them to every duty which he owes to God and man. Here, as in every other practical art or science, principles and practice must be constantly united; they illustrate and confirm

each other. Fundamental principles must first be learned; they must be applied to the heart, so as to awaken the conscience to a sense of the evil of sin, &c., and have a suitable influence on our actions. This first step in christian knowledge will prepare the mind for the second; and so on till we come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. If a minister of the gospel be unacquainted with this practical application of the principles of the christian religion to his own heart and life, he is deficient in one of the most essential qualifications for his office, whatever may be the degree of his speculative knowledge.

The observations of a professor of divinity in a foreign university, on the qualifications of a gospel minister, appear to me so just and excellent, that I shall take the liberty to translate them, and present them to the reader.

"If," says he, "an evangelical pastor be only a voice, a voice crying in the temple, and nothing more, as many seem to think; if he be nothing, but a man who has sufficient memory to retain a discourse, and boldness sufficient to repeat it before a large congregation—If an evangelical pastor be only an orator, whose business it is to please his audience and procure applause—then we have nothing to do, but to make the voice of our pupils as pleasing and sonorous as possible—to exercise their memory, and to give them a bold and hardened countenance, not to say impudent—to teach them a rhetoric adapted to the pulpit and our audiences; and by perpetual declamation, like the sophists of old, render them prompt and ready in speaking with plausibility on any subject, and to point out to them the sources from whence they may draw matter for declamation. But the pastor whom we should form in our academies, is something much greater and more divine than all this. He is a man of God, who is influenced by nothing but high and heavenly thoughts, of promoting the glory of God, of propagating the kingdom of Christ, and destroying the power of satan; of obtaining daily a more perfect knowledge of that sublime science on which eternal happiness depends, of more widely diffusing it, and more efficaciously persuading others to embrace it; of restoring fallen Christianity, binding up the wounds of the church, and healing her divisions.—He is a man whose business it is to perform and direct all the parts of divine worship before the whole church; to offer to God, the desires, the prayers, the praises and thanksgivings of the people assembled.—This pastor is a man divinely called, an ambassador of God sent to men, that he may bring as many souls as possible, from darkness to light, from the world to Christ, from the power of satan to God, from the way of perdition to the way of salvation: a man who, by public preaching and private instruction, faithfully explains the word of God, especially the doctrines of salvation contained in it, and by the

simplicity and clearness of explanation adapts them to the capacity of every individual person. O tremendous employment!" &c.*

I have no intention, by these observations, to reflect on any denomination of men filling the sacred office; I have introduced them merely with a view to show, what are the qualifications essentially necessary in a minister of the gospel, considering them as distinct from those peculiarities of opinion and modes of worship by which true Christians are distinguished from one another; and to illustrate the character of Mr. Wesley as a true gospel minister. He possessed the requisites for his office in no small degree: he had a clear view of the state of human nature, and of the doctrines of the gospel, pointing out God's method of restoring sinners to his favor and image. Sin blinds the understanding, hardens the heart, makes the conscience insensible of the defilement of evil, and renders a man careless of his spiritual and eternal concerns. Like a wise master-builder, he explained and enforced the doctrines of repentance towards God, and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as first principles in christian experience; as the entrance into it, and the foundation on which it is built. His own experience illustrated and confirmed the scriptural views he had obtained of these doctrines: he spoke of them in their proper order, and described their effects with clearness and firmness; not as the uncertain conjectures of a speculative philosophy, but as the certain practical truths of divine revelation. He was now in the habit of giving a practical application to the higher principles of the gospel, in the government of his heart and life, and was daily growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in a way which could not deceive him, where theory and practice were thus combined. He was therefore, well prepared for the ministry, not only by learning and deep study, in which he had been conversant for many years, but also by such exercises of the heart, as led him to a thorough knowledge of human nature, and of the method of salvation laid down in the gospel. If all the ministers in England, of every denomination, were thus qualified for their office, and animated with the same zeal, to propagate the truths of religion by every means in their power, what an amazing change should we soon see in the morals of the people! It is an awful consideration, that ministers, who are set for the defence of the gospel, and the propagation of true christian piety, should be the hinderances of it in any degree, through a want of knowledge, experience, diligence and zeal. It would be well if every minister would seriously examine himself on these heads, as Mr. Wesley did, and keep in view the account which he must soon give to the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls.

Though Mr. Wesley had been very diligent in his Master's service, since the 21st of May, he had not yet been able to preach. On Sun-

* *Werenfelsius* in Dissert. de Scopo Doctoris Theologi.

day, July 2nd, he observes, "Being to preach this morning for the first time, I received strength for the work of the ministry. The whole service at Basingshaw Church, was wonderfully animating, especially the gospel, concerning the miraculous draught of fishes. I preached salvation by faith, to a deeply attentive audience, and afterwards gave the cup. Observing a woman full of reverence, I asked her if she had forgiveness of sins? She answered with great sweetness and humility, 'yes, I know it now, that I have forgiveness.'"

"I preached again at London-Wall, without fear or weariness. As I was going into the church, a woman caught hold of my hand and blessed me most heartily, telling me she had received forgiveness of sins while I was preaching in the morning." In the evening they held a meeting for prayer, when two other persons found peace with God.

July 10th, Mr. Wesley was requested by the Rev. Mr. Sparks to go to Newgate: he went and preached to the ten malefactors under sentence of death. But he observes it was with a heavy heart. "My old prejudices," says he, "against the possibility of a death-bed repentance, still hung upon me, and I could hardly hope there was mercy for those whose time was so short." But in the midst of his languid discourse, as he calls it, his mind acquired a sudden confidence in the mercy of God, and he promised them all pardon in the name of Jesus Christ, if they would even then, as at the last hour, repent and believe the gospel. He adds, "I did believe they would accept the proffered mercy, and could not help telling them, I had no doubt but God would give me every soul of them." He preached to them again the next day with earnestness, from the second lesson, when two or three began to be deeply affected.

This day Mr. Wesley received a letter from Mr. William Delamotte, giving an account of his mother. "I cannot keep peace," says he; "the mercies of God come so abundantly on our unworthy family, that I am not able to declare them. Yet as they are his blessings through your ministry, I must inform you of them, as they will strengthen your hands, and prove helpers of your joy. Great then, I believe, was the struggle in my mother, between nature and grace: but God who knoweth the very heart and reins, hath searched her out. Her spirit is become as that of a little child. She is converted, and Christ hath spoken peace to her soul. This change was begun in her the morning you left us (the 8th,) though she concealed it from you. The next morning when she waked the following words of Scripture were present to her mind: 'Either what woman, having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one of them, doth not light a candle and sweep the house diligently till she find it.' She rose immediately. took up Bishop Taylor, and opened on a place which so strongly asserted this living faith, that she was fully convinced. But the enemy preached humility to her, that she could not deserve so great a

gift. God, however, still pursued, and she could not long forbear to communicate the emotion of her soul to me. We prayed, read, and conversed for an hour. The Lord made use of a mean instrument to convince her of her ignorance of the word of God. Throughout that day she was more and more enlightened by the truth, till at length she broke out, 'Where have I been! I know nothing; I see nothing; my mind is all darkness; how have I opposed the Scripture!' See was tempted to think, she was laboring after something that was not to be attained: but Christ did not suffer her to fall: she flew to him in prayer and singing, and continued agonizing all the evening. The next morning, when reading in her closet, she received reconciliation and peace. She could not contain the joy attending it: nor forbear imparting to her friends and neighbors, that she had found the piece which she had lost. Satan in vain attempted to shake her; she felt in herself,

> 'Faith's assurance, Hope's increase,
> All the confidence of Love.'"

Mr. Sparks asked him if he would preach at St. Hellen's. He agreed to supply Mr. Broughton's place, who was at Oxford, "arming our friends," says Mr. Wesley, "against the faith." He adds, "I preached faith in Christ to a vast congregation, with great boldness, adding much extempore." In his discourses, Mr. Wesley proposed the doctrines of the gospel with clearness, and illustrated them with great strength of evidence from the Scriptures, in which he was remarkably ready; and delivering them in a warm animated manner, he generally carried conviction to the minds of those who gave him a fair and candid hearing. After this sermon, Mrs. Hind, with whom Mr. Broughton lodged, sent for Mr. Wesley, and acknowledged her agreement with the doctrine he had preached; she wished him to come and talk with Mr. Broughton, who, she thought, must himself agree to it.

The next day, July 12th, he preached at Newgate to the condemned felons. He visited one of them in his cell, sick of a fever, a poor black, who had robbed his master. "I told him," says Mr. Wesley, "of one who came down from heaven to save lost sinners, and him in particular. I described the sufferings of the Son of God; his sorrows, agony and death. He listened with all the signs of eager astonishment. The tears trickled down his cheeks, while he cried, 'What! was it for me? Did the Son of God suffer all this for so poor a creature as me?' I left him waiting for the salvation of God."

July 13th. "I read prayers and preached at Newgate, and administered the sacrament to our friends and five of the felons. I was much affected and assisted in prayer for them with comfort and confidence. July 14th, I received the sacrament from the ordinary and spake strongly to the poor malefactors, and to the sick negro in the

condemned hole: was moved by his sorrow and earnest desire of Christ Jesus. The next day, July 15th, I preached there again, with an enlarged heart; and rejoiced with my poor black, who now believes that the Son of God loves him, and gave himself for him."

"July 17th, I preached at Newgate on death, which the malefactors must suffer, the day after to-morrow. Mr. Sparks assisted in giving the sacrament, and another clergyman was present. Newington asked me to go in the coach with him. At one o'clock, I was with the black in his cell, when more of the malefactors came to us. I found great help and power in prayer for them. One of them rose all in a sweat (probably with the agitation of his mind) and professed faith in Christ. I found myself overwhelmed with the love of Christ to sinners. The negro was quite happy, and another criminal in an excellent temper. I talked with one more, concerning faith in Christ: he was greatly moved. The Lord, I trust, will help his unbelief also." The clergymen now left them, and Mr. Wesley with several others, joined in fervent prayer and thanksgiving at Mr. Bray's. At six in the evening, he returned to the prisoners, with Mr. Bray. They talked chiefly with Hudson and Newington. They prayed with them, and both seemed deeply affected. Newington declared, that he had some time before, felt inexpressible joy and love in prayer, but was much troubled at its being so soon withdrawn.

Mr. Wesley goes on. "July 18th, the ordinary read prayers and preached; I administered the sacrament to the black and eight more; having first instructed them in the nature of it. One of them told me in the cells, that whenever he offered to pray, or had a serious thought, something came and hindered him, and that it was almost continually with him. After we had prayed for him, he arose amazingly comforted; full of joy and love; so that we could not doubt, but he had received the atonement." In the evening, he and Mr. Bray were locked in the cells. "We wrestled," says he, "in mighty prayer; all the criminals were present, and cheerful. The soldier in particular, found his comfort and joy increase every moment. Another, from the time he communicated, has been in perfect peace. Joy was visible in all their faces.—We sang,

'Behold the Saviour of mankind,
Nail'd to the shameful tree;
How vast the love that him inclin'd,
To bleed and die for thee.'

It was one of the most triumphant hours I have ever known. Yet, on July 19th, I rose very heavy and backward to visit them for the last time. At six in the morning, I prayed and sung with them all together. The ordinary would read prayers, and he preached most miserably." Mr. Sparks and Mr. Broughton were present; the latter of whom administered the sacrament, and then prayed; Mr. Wesley prayed after him. At half-past nine o'clock, their irons were knocked off, and their hands tied, and they prepared for the solemn journey,

and the fatal hour. The clergymen went in a coach, and about eleven the criminals arrived at Tyburn. Mr. Wesley, Mr. Sparks, and Mr. Broughton got upon the cart with them: the ordinary endeavored to follow; but the poor prisoners begged that he would not, and the mob kept him down. They were all cheerful: full of comfort, peace, and triumph: firmly persuaded that Christ had died for them, had taken away their sins, and waited to receive them into paradise. None showed any natural terror of death: no fear, or crying or tear. "I never saw," says Mr. Wesley, "such calm triumph, such incredible indifference to dying. We sang several hymns; particularly,

> 'A guilty, weak and helpless worm,
> Into thy hands I fall;
> Be thou my life, my righteousness,
> My Jesus and my all.'

I took leave of each in particular. Mr. Broughton bid them not to be surprised when the cart should draw away. They cheerfully replied, they should not. We left them going to meet their Lord. They were turned off exactly at twelve o'clock; not one struggled for life. I spoke a few suitable words to the crowd, and returned full of peace and confidence of our friends' happiness."

The whole of this awful scene, must have appeared very extraordinary. The newness and singularity of it, would add greatly to its effects, not only on the minds of the clergymen concerned in it, but on the populace, at the place of execution. Some, well-meaning persons, have greatly objected to the publication of such conversions as these, even supposing them possible and real; apprehending that they may give encouragement to vice among the lower orders of the people. The possibility of such conversions, can hardly be disputed, by those who understand, and believe the New Testament: we must judge of their reality, by such evidence, as the circumstances of the persons will admit. The objection against their publication when they really happen, for fear they should encourage vice, appears to me without any solid foundation. It is pretty certain, the persons who commit crimes that bring them to the gallows, have no thoughts either of heaven or hell, which have any influence on their actions. They are so far from paying any regard to the publication of these conversions, that they mock and laugh at them. Conversion is the turning of a sinner from his sins to the living God: it is a change; 1. In a man's *judgment* of himself, so that he condemns his former course of life, and the principles from which he acted even in his best works: 2. In his *will;* he now chooses God and the ways of God, in preference to vice, under any of its enticing forms: 3. In his affections; he hates the things he formerly loved, and loves the things which lead to God and heaven. To say, that the publication of such conversions, which in every step of their progress, condemn sin, can encourage the

practice of it, appears to me little less than a contradiction. Is it possible, that any person, who has the least serious thought of heaven, would voluntarily choose to go thither by the way of Tyburn or Newgate? Can we for a moment suppose, that a person who thinks of finally going to heaven, will plunge himself deeper into sin in order to get there? That he will bring himself so close to the brink of hell as Tyburn or Newgate, (where there is a bare possibility, but little probability, that he will not fall into the pit of destruction) in hopes of conversion and heaven? Such a conduct would be a proof of insanity. It seems to me as certain a principle as any from which we can reason, that the conversion of notorious sinners from vice to virtue, is a public condemnation of vice, and must discourage it, in proportion as these conversions are made known, and firmly believed to be genuine and real.

July 20th, Mr. Wesley was at the morning prayers at Islington, and had some serious conversation with Mr. Stonehouse, the vicar. The next day, Mr. Robson confessed that he believed there was such a faith as Mr. Wesley and his friends spake of, but thought it impossible for him to attain it; he thought also that it must necessarily bring on a persecution, which seems to have had a very unfavorable influence on his mind, though convinced in his judgment, of the truth. In the evening Mr. Chapman, who had embraced the doctrine of justification by faith, came from Mr. Broughton, and seemed quite estranged from his friends. He thought their present proceedings would raise a persecution, and he insisted that there was no necessity for exposing themselves to such difficulties and dangers, in the present circumstances of things. This kind of worldly prudence in propagating the doctrines of the gospel is sure to produce lukewarmness and a cowardly mind, if it do not arise from them. It has occasioned greater evils to the church of Christ, than all the persecutions that ever happened. It is this principle of worldly prudence, that has induced some ministers to adulterate the most important doctrines of grace, with the prevailing philosophy of the age in which they have lived, to make them pleasing and palatable to the more polite and learned part of their congregations. By this means the preacher has gained reputation, but his ministry has lost its authority and power to change the heart and reform the life: the natural powers of man have been raised to a sufficiency for every duty required of him, and the gospel has been sunk into a mere collection of moral precepts enforced by the certain prospect of future rewards and punishments. In this way the true doctrine of faith, and of a divine supernatural influence, accompanying the means of grace, have been gradually lost sight of, and at length denied; and the gospel thus mutilated has never been found of sufficient efficacy to accomplish the purposes for which it was promulgated to the world. It is remarkable that in every great revival of religion, these doctrines

have been particularly insisted upon, and have generally occasioned some opposition, both from the wise and ignorant among mankind. And when the professors of religion of any denomination, wishing to avoid persecution and become more respectable in the eyes of men, have either concealed the truth, or debased it by philosophical explanations, the offence of the cross indeed ceased, but the glory of the gospel departed from them: they became lukewarm, and gradually dwindled away, unless held together by some temporal consideration, having a name to live, but were dead.

I cannot, on the contrary, commend the rash intemperate zeal of some young converts in religion, who have often, both in ancient and modern times, invited persecution by their own imprudence; either by ill-timed reproofs, or an improper introduction of their religious sentiments in discourse. Nor can I approve of the rude vulgarity, which has sometimes been used both in conversation and in the pulpit, under a pretence of speaking the plain truths of the gospel. There is a medium between these extremes; and I would say to myself, and to the reader, *medio tutissimus ibis*, the middle path is the safest, though perhaps the most difficult to keep on some trying occasions.

Had Mr. Wesley and his brother listened to the Syren song of ease and reputation, they would never have been the happy instruments of so much good as we have seen produced by their means. On this occasion Mr. Wesley said to Mr. Chapman, "I believe every doctrine of God must have these two marks, 1. It will meet with opposition from men and devils; 2. It will finally triumph and prevail. I expressed my readiness to part with him, and all my friends and relations for the truth's sake. I avowed my liberty and happiness, since Whitsunday; made a bridge for a flying enemy, and we parted tolerable friends."

July 24th, he preached on justification by faith, at Mr. Stonehouse's, who could not yet conceive how God can justify the ungodly, upon repentance and faith in Christ, without any previous holiness. He seemed to think that a man must be sanctified before he can know that he is justified. It is probable Mr. Stonehouse did not consider, that, to justify, in the language of St. Paul, is to pardon a repenting believing sinner, as an act of grace; not for the sake of any previous holiness in him, but in and by Jesus Christ, with whom he is then united by a living faith, and entitled to such gospel blessings as may lead him on to true holiness of heart and life. This day Mr. Wesley agreed with Mr. Stonehouse, to take charge of his parish, under him as curate; after which he read prayers at Islington almost every day, and had frequent opportunities of conversing with Mr. Stonehouse, and of explaining the nature of justification, and of justifying faith.

July 26th, Mr. Wesley was at Blendon. Here Mrs. Delamotte called upon him to rejoice with her in the experience of the divine

goodness. She then confessed, that all her desire had been to affront or make him angry: she had watched every word he spake; had persecuted the truth, and all who professed it, &c.—A fine instance of the evidence and power of gospel truth, to subdue a mind blinded by the most obstinate prejudice.

Mr. Wesley was now incessantly employed in his blessed Master's service; either in reading prayers and preaching in the churches, or holding meetings in private houses, for prayer and expounding the Scriptures; and the number of persons convinced of sin, and converted to God, by his ministry, was astonishing.—August 3, he observes, "I corrected Mr. Whitefield's Journal for the press, my advice to suppress it, being overruled." In the end of this month he went to Oxford, where he saw and conversed with Mr. Gambold, Mr. Kinchin, and several others of his old friends, who surprised him by their readiness to receive the doctrine of faith.

The number of persons who attended their evening meetings in London, were now much increased. September the 10th, he tells us, that, after preaching at Sir George Wheeler's chapel in the morning, and at St. Botolph's in the afternoon, he prayed and expounded at Sims's to above three hundred attentive hearers. Saturday, September 16th, in the evening, Mr. John Wesley returned from Hernhuth, when he and Mr. Charles Wesley took sweet counsel together, and compared their experience in the things of God. On the 22nd, in expounding the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, at Bray's, a dispute arose, concerning absolute predestination. This is the first time I find any mention of this mischievous dispute. Mr. Wesley says, "I entered my protest against that doctrine."

Mr. Wesley, by the daily exercise of preaching, expounding, exhorting, and praying with the people, had now acquired some degree of boldness in public speaking; the great and leading doctrines of the gospel were become familiar to his mind, and expression flowed natural and easy in conversing on them. He preached at Islington, October 15th, and added to his notes, a good deal extempore. On Friday the 20th, seeing few people present, at St. Antholin's, he thought of preaching extempore. "I was afraid," says he, "yet ventured, trusting in the promise, 'Lo! I am with you always.' I spoke on justification, from the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, for three quarters of an hour, without hesitation. Glory be to God, who keepeth his promise for ever.

This day he and his brother Mr. John Wesley waited on Dr. Gibson,* the Bishop of London, to answer the complaints which he had

* Dr. Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, was born in Westmoreland in 1669. He applied himself early and vigorously to learning, and displayed his knowledge in several writings, which recommended him to the patronage of Archbishop Tennison, who made him his domestic chaplain. Being now a Member of Convocation, he engaged in a controversy, in which he defended his patron's rights, as president, in eleven pamphlets.

heard alleged against them, respecting their preaching an absolute assurance of salvation. Some of the bishop's words were, "If by assurance you mean, an inward persuasion, whereby a man is conscious in himself, after examining his life by the law of God, and weighing his own sincerity, that he is in a state of salvation, and acceptable to God, I do not see how any good Christian can be without such an assurance." They answered, "We do contend for this, but we have been charged with Antinomianism, because we preach justification by faith alone. Can any one preach otherwise, who agrees with our Church in the Scriptures?" Indeed by preaching it strongly, and not sufficiently inculcating good works as following justification, and being the proper evidences of it, some have been made Antinomians in theory rather than practice; particularly in the time of King Charles. "But," said the bishop, "there is a very heavy charge brought against us, bishops, in consequence of your having re-baptized an adult, and alleged the archbishop's authority for doing it." Mr. John Wesley answered, that he had expressly declared the contrary, and acquitted the archbishop from having any hand in the matter; but added, "If a person dissatisfied with lay-baptism, should desire Episcopal, I should think it my duty to administer it, after having acquainted the bishop, according to the canon." "Well," said the bishop, "I am against it myself, when any one has had baptism among the Dissenters."—The bishop here shows that he possessed a candid and liberal mind. —Mr. Charles Wesley adds, "My brother enquired whether his reading in a religious society made it a conventicle? His lordship warily referred us to the laws: but, on urging the question, 'Are religious societies conventicles?' he answered, 'No, I think not: however you can read the acts and laws as well as I; I determine nothing.' We hoped his lordship would not, henceforward, receive

He afterwards enlarged them on a more comprehensive plan, containing a view of the legal duties and rights of the English clergy, which was published under the title of *Codex Juris Ecclesiastici Anglicani*, in folio. Archbishop Tennison dying in 1715, and Dr. Wake, Bishop of Lincoln, being made Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Gibson succeeded him as Bishop of Lincoln; and in 1720, was promoted to the Bishopric of London. He governed his diocese with the most exact care, but was extremely jealous of the least privileges belonging to the Church. He approved of the toleration of Protestant Dissenters, but opposed all attempts to procure a repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts. His opposition to those licentious assemblies, called masquerades, gave great umbrage at Court, and prevented further preferment. His pastoral letters are justly esteemed masterly productions. Beside the *Codex* above-mentioned, he published, 1. An edition of Drummond's *Polemo-Middiana*, and James V. of Scotland's *Cantilena Rustica*, with notes. 2. The *Cronicon Saxonicum*, with a Latin translation, and notes. 3. *Reliquiæ Spelmannianæ*. 4. An edition of *Quintilian de Arte Oratoria*, with notes. 5. An English translation of Camden's *Britannia*, with additions, 2 vols. folio. 6. A number of small pieces collected together and printed in 3 vols. folio.—He died in September, 1748. He was a steady friend to the established Church, but a great enemy to persecution: a great economist, but liberal and beneficent. Dr. Crow, who had once been his chaplain, left him two thousand five hundred pounds; the whole of which, the bishop gave to Dr. Crow's own relations who were very poor. He corresponded with Dr. Watts, and expressed a friendly concern for the interests of religion, among Dissenters as well as in his own Church.

an accusation against a presbyter, but at the mouth of two or three witnesses. He said, 'No, by no means; and you may have free access to me at all times.' We thanked him and took our leave."

Tuesday, November 14th, Mr. Charles Wesley had another conference with the Bishop of London, without his brother: "I have used your lordship's permission," said he, "to wait upon you. A woman desires me to baptize her, not being satisfied with her baptism by a Dissenter. She says, sure and unsure is not the same." He immediately took fire, and interrupted me. "I wholly disapprove of it: it is irregular." "My lord," said Mr. Wesley, "I did not expect your approbation; I only came in obedience, to give you notice of my intention." "It is irregular; I never receive any such information, but from the minister." "My lord, your rubric does not so much as require the minister to give you notice, but any discreet person. I have the minister's leave." "Who gave you authority to baptize?" "Your lordship;* and I shall exercise it in any part of the known world." "Are you a licensed curate?" "I have the leave of the proper minister." "But do you not know, that no man can exercise parochial duty in London, without my leave? It is only *sub silentio.*" "But you know, many do take that permission for authority; and you yourself allow it." "It is one thing to connive, and another to approve; I have power to inhibit you." "Does your lordship exert that power? Do you now inhibit me?" "O why will you push matters to an extreme? I do not inhibit you." "Why then, my lord, according to your own concession, you permit or authorize me." "I have power to punish and to forbear." "To punish: that seems to imply, that I have done something worthy of punishment; I should be gad to know, that I may answer. Does your lordship charge me with any crime?" "No, no, I charge you with no crime." "Do you then dispense with my giving you notice of any baptisms in future?" "I neither dispense, nor not dispense."—"He censured Lawrence on lay-baptism; and blamed my brother's sermon as inclining to Antinomianism. I charged Archbishop Tillotson with denying the faith; he allowed it, and owned they ran into one extreme to avoid another." He concluded the conference, with "Well, sir, you knew my judgment before, and you know it now; good morrow to you."

November 22d, Mr. Wesley set out in the coach, to visit his friends at Oxford. We may observe, that he was in the first part of his ministry, very much alone; having preached the gospel, fully, and boldly, in many of the churches, in Newgate, and at Islington; while his brother was in Germany, and Mr. Whitefield in America. He had met with little opposition, except from some private friends, and at Islington; where the polite part of his congregation, had sometimes shown a want of regard to decency in their behavior, and

* See above, page 77.

many had frequently gone out of the church. He now clearly saw, that a faithful discharge of his duty, would expose him to many hardships and dangers; and though he generally had great confidence in God, yet he had also his seasons of dejection, when he was ready to sink under the pressure of his difficulties; which made him fully sensible of his weakness, and, that he must be supported in his work by a power not his own. On the 25th, at Oxford, he experienced great depression of mind; "I felt," says he, "a pining desire to die, forseeing the infinite dangers and troubles of life." But as he was daily engaged in the exercise of some part or other of his ministerial office, the times of refreshing, from the presence of the Lord, frequently returned upon him; his strength was renewed, and he was again enabled to go on his way rejoicing.

Mr. Whitefield was at this time, at Oxford, and was earnest with Mr. Wesley to accept a college living. This gives pretty clear evidence that no plan of itinerant preaching was yet fixed on, nor indeed thought of: had any such plan been in agitation among them, it is very certain Mr. Whitefield would not have urged this advice on Mr. Charles Wesley, whom he loved as a brother, and whose labors he highly esteemed.

December the 11th, Mr. Wesley left Oxford, and coming to Wickham in the evening, took up his lodgings with a Mr. Hollis, to whom, I suppose, he had been recommended. "He entertained me," adds Mr. Wesley, "with his French prophets, who in his account, are equal, if not superior, to the prophets of the Old Testament. While we were undressing, he fell into violent agitations, and gabbled like a turkey-cock. I was frightened, and began exorcising him, with, Thou deaf and dumb devil, &c. He soon recovered from his fit of inspiration.—I prayed and went to bed, not half liking my bed-fellow: nor did I sleep very sound with satan so near me." He escaped, however, without harm, and came safe to London the next day, where he heard a glorious account of the success of the gospel at Islington, some of the fiercest opposers being converted.

January 5th, 1739, Mr. Wesley gives us another convincing proof, that no plan of becoming itinerants, was yet formed. He says, "My brother, Mr. Seward, Hall, Whitefield, Ingham, Kinchin, and Hutchins, all set upon me to settle at Oxford." But he could not agree to their proposal, without being more fully satisfied that it was the order of Providence. This advice, however, and a similar instance above-mentioned, plainly show, that their views at present extended no further than to preach the gospel in the churches, wherever they had opportunity.

About this time some persons being greatly affected under the public prayers and preaching, fell into violent convulsive motions, accompanied with loud and dismal cries. This gave great offence to many, and occasioned disputes. Mr. Charles Wesley mentions this circum-

stance in his Journal on the 10th of January. "At the society," says he, "we had some discourse about agitations: no sign of grace, in my humble opinion."

February 21st, Mr. Wesley and his brother thought it prudent to wait on Dr. Potter, then Archbishop of Canterbury, to prevent any ill impression which the various false reports of their proceedings might produce on his mind. "He showed us," says Mr. Wesley, "great affection; spoke mildly of Mr. Whitefield; cautioned us to give no more umbrage than was necessary for our own defence: to forbear exceptionable phrases; to keep to the doctrines of the Church. We told him, we expected persecution would abide by the Church till her articles and homilies were repealed. He assured us, he knew of no design in the governors of the Church, to innovate; and neither should their be any innovation while he lived. He avowed justification by faith alone; and signified his gladness to see us, as often as we pleased."

"From him we went to the Bishop of London; who denied that he had condemned, or even heard much concerning us. He said Mr. Whitefield's Journal was tainted with enthusiasm, though he himself was a pious well-meaning youth. He warned us against Antinomianism, and dismissed us kindly."

"March 28th. We dissuaded my brother from going to Bristol: from an unaccountable fear that it would prove fatal to him. He offered himself willingly, to whatever the Lord should appoint. The next day he set out,* recommended by us to the grace of God. He left a blessing behind him. I desired to die with him."

Soon after this, a Mr. Shaw began to give some disturbance to their little society, by insisting, that there is no priesthood; that is, there is no order of men in the christian ministry, who, properly speaking, exercise the functions of a priest: that he himself had as good a right to baptize and administer the sacrament, as any other man. It appears by his claiming a right to baptize, &c. that he was a layman; and it must be acknowledged by all parties, that christian ministers, considered as an order in the Church distinguished by their office from other believers, are no where, in the New Testament, called priests. "I tried in vain," says Mr. Wesley, "to check Mr. Shaw in his wild rambling talk against a christian priesthood. At last I told him, I would oppose him to the utmost, and either he or I, must quit the society. In expounding, I warned them strongly against schism; into which Mr. Shaw's notions must necessarily lead them. The society were all for my brother's immediate return. April 19th, I found Mr. Stonehouse exactly right (that is, in his notions on the priesthood); warned Mrs. Vaughan and Brookmans, against

* This exactly accords with Mr. John Wesley's printed Journal. See his Works, vol. xxvii. page 64.

Shaw's pestilent errors. I spoke strongly at the Savoy society, in behalf of the Church of England."

April 24th, Mr. Whitefield preached at Fetter Lane; being returned from Bristol, where he first preached in the open air, and in some sense opened the way to an itinerant ministry, which was sure to follow this step; but of which none of them hitherto, seem to have entertained the least conception. It seems that Howel Harris came to London with him; "A man," says Mr. Wesley, "after my own heart. Mr. Whitefield related the dismal effects of Shaw's doctrine at Oxford. Both he and Howel Harris insisted on Shaw's expulsion from the society. April 26th, Mr. Whitefield preached in Islington church-yard: the numerous audience, could not have been more affected within the walls. Saturday the 28th, he preached out again. After him, Mr. Bowers got up to speak. I conjured him not: but he beat me down, and followed his impulse. I carried many away with me." This last circumstance, is the more worthy of notice, as it is, so far as I can find, the first instance of a layman attempting to preach among the Methodists. It must be observed however, that it was not with approbation, but by violence. He was not discouraged, however, by this opposition: and it is probable, that, about this time, several other laymen began to expound or preach; for on the 16th of May, a dispute arose at the society in Fetter-Lane, about lay-preaching; which certainly implies that some laymen had begun to preach, and that the practice was likely to become more general. Mr. Wesley observes, that he and Mr. Whitefield declared against it.

May 25th, Mr. Clagget having invited Mr. Wesley to Broadoaks, he went thither, and preached to four or five hundred attentive hearers. May 29th, "A farmer," says he, "invited me to preach in his field. I did so, to about five hundred; on, 'Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' On the 31st, a Quaker sent me a pressing invitation to preach at Thackstead. I scrupled preaching in another's parish, till I had been refused the church. Many Quakers, and near seven hundred others, attended, while I declared in the highways, the scripture hath concluded all under sin."

June the 6th, Two or three who had embraced the opinions of Shaw, declared themselves no longer members of the Church of England. "Now," says Mr. Wesley, "am I clear of them: by renouncing the Church, they have discharged me." About this time the French Prophets raised some disturbance in the society, and gained several proselytes, who warmly defended them. June 12th, two of them were present at a meeting, and occasioned much disputing. At length Mr. Wesley asked, "Who is on God's side? Who for the old Prophets, rather than the new? Let them follow me. They followed me into the preaching-room. I expounded the lesson; several gave an account of their conversion: dear brother Bowers confessed

his errors; and we rejoiced and triumphed in the name of the Lord our God."

June the 19th, Mr. Wesley was at Lambeth, with the archbishop, who treated him with much severity. His Grace declared he would not dispute; nor would he, AS YET, proceed to excommunication. It does not appear that the archbishop condemned the doctrines Mr. Wesley preached, but the manner of preaching them: it was irregular, and this was judged a cause sufficient for condemning him. Regularity is undoubtedly necessary, in the government both of church and state. But when a system of rules and orders purely human, is so established for the government of the Church, as to be made perpetual, whatever changes may take place in the state of the people; it must, in many cases, become injurious rather than useful. And when conformity to such an establishment, is considered as comprehending almost all virtue, and made the only road to favor and preferment in the Church; and a deviation from it, is marked with disgrace; it becomes an idol, at whose altar many will be tempted to sacrifice their judgment, their conscience, and their usefulness. Civil government knows nothing of this perpetual sameness of its regulations and laws, in all circumstances of the people. And why should the Church, in regulations which are purely human, and prudential? The end of regularity, or conformity to a certain established order in the government of the Church, is, the propagation of christian knowledge, and the increase of true religion; but if a minister be so circumstanced, that regularity would obstruct, rather than promote his usefulness in these respects, irregularity becomes his duty, and ought not to be condemned by others, when no essential principle of religion is violated, nor any serious inconvenience follows from it. In this case, the end to be attained, is infinitely more important than any prudential rules to direct the means of attaining it: which should always admit of such alterations as circumstances require, to promote the end intended.

Mr. Wesley bore the archbishop's reproof with great firmness, while in his presence; but after leaving him, he fell into great heaviness, and for several days suffered a severe inward conflict. He perceived that it arose from the fear of man. Mr. Whitefield urged him to preach in the fields the next Sunday: by this step he would break down the bridge, render his retreat difficult or impossible, and be forced to fight his way forward in the work of the ministry. This advice he followed. June 24th, "I prayed," says he, "and went forth, in the name of Jesus Christ. I found near a thousand helpless sinners, waiting for the word in Moorfields. I invited them in my Master's words, as well as name; 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' The Lord was with me, even me, the meanest of his messengers, according to his promise. At St. Paul's, the psalms, lesson &c. for the day, put new life into me:

and so did the sacrament. My load was gone, and all my doubts and scruples. God shone on my path, and I knew this was his will concerning me. I walked to Kennington-common, and cried to multitudes upon multitudes, 'Repent ye and believe the gospel.' The Lord was my strength, and my mouth, and my wisdom. O that all would therefore praise the Lord, for his goodness!"

June 29th, He was at Wickham, in his way to Oxford. "Here," says he, "I heard of much disturbance occasioned by Bowers' preaching in the streets." Thus early, it appears that lay-preaching had commenced, even beyond the societies in London, though not with the consent of any of the clergymen. The next day he reached Oxford, and waited on the Dean, who spoke with unusual severity against field-preaching, and Mr. Whitefield, who may be called the author or founder of field-preaching; it is perhaps on this account, that he has so often been supposed to be the founder of Methodism. July 1st, he preached a sermon on justification, before the university, with great boldness. All were very attentive: one could not help weeping. July 2d, Mr. Gambold came to him, who had been with the vice-chancellor, and well received. "I waited," says Mr. Wesley, "on the vice-chancellor, at his own desire. I gave him a full account of the Methodists, which he approved, but objected to the irregularity of doing good in other men's parishes. He charged Mr. Whitefield with breach of promise, appealed to the Dean, and appointed a second meeting there. All were against my sermon, as liable to be misunderstood. July 3d, Mr. Bowers had been laid hold of, for preaching in Oxford. To-day the beadle brought him to me. I talked to him closely; he had nothing to reply, but promised to do so no more, and thereby obtained his liberty. At night I had another conference with the Dean, who cited Mr. Whitefield to judgment.* I said, 'Mr. Dean, he shall be ready to answer the citation.' He used the utmost address to bring me off from preaching abroad, from expounding in houses, and from singing psalms. He denied justification by faith, and all vital religion."

July 4th, Mr. Wesley returned to London. On the 8th, he preached to near ten thousand hearers, by computation, in Moorfields, and the same day at Kennington-common. His labors now daily increased upon him; and his success, in bringing great numbers from darkness to light, and in rousing the minds of vast multitudes to a serious enquiry after religion, was beyond anything we can, at present, easily conceive. In such circumstances as these, it is almost impossible for a minister, to keep his mind quite free from all thoughts of self-applause. He will be led, at first almost insensibly, to think more highly of himself than he ought, to attribute some part of his success to his own superior excellences, and to think too meanly of others. If his judgment be rightly informed, and his conscience tender, he is shocked when he discovers these workings of his mind, and endeav-

* I suppose for some breach of order.

ors to suppress them; but he soon finds that the thoughts and propensities of his heart, are not under the control of his judgment; they present themselves on every occasion against his will, and are not a little strengthened by the commendations and praises of those who have been benefited by him. The natural temper of the mind, is sometimes so far awakened on these occasions, as to produce a severe inward conflict, bring on great distress, and make a man ashamed of himself in the presence of God. Mr. Wesley felt the full force of the temptations which arose from the success of his ministry. July 22d, he says, "Never, till now, did I know the strength of temptation and energy of sin. Who, that consults only the quiet of his own mind, would covet great success? I live in a continual storm; my soul is always in my hand; the enemy thrusts sore at me that I may fall, and a worse enemy than the Devil, is, my own heart. *Miror quemquam prædicatorem salvari.* I wonder any preacher of the gospel is saved. August the 7th, I preached repentance and faith at Plaistow, and at night expounded on Lazarus dead and raised, in a private house. The next day, called on Thomas Keen, a mild and candid Quaker. Preached at Marybone.—Too well pleased with my success, which brought upon me strong temptations. August 10th, I gave Mr. Whitefield some account both of my labors and conflicts."

"Dear George,

"I forgot to mention the most material occurrence at Plaistow; namely, that a clergyman was there convinced of sin. He stood under me, and appeared throughout my discourse, under the greatest perturbation of mind. In our return we were much delighted with an old spiritual Quaker, who is clear in justification. Friend Keen seems to have experience, and is right in the foundation. I cannot preach out on the week days, for the expense of coach-hire: nor can I accept of dear Mr. Steward's offer, to which I should be less backward, would he follow my advice; but while he is so lavish of his Lord's goods, I cannot consent that his ruin should in any degree *seem* to be under my hand. I am continually tempted to leave off preaching, and hide myself like J. Hutchins. I should then be free from temptation, and have leisure to attend to my own improvement. God continues to work by me, but not in me, that I perceive. Do not reckon upon me, my brother, in the work God is doing; for I cannot expect that he should long employ one, who is ever longing and murmuring to be discharged."

"To-day," says Mr. Wesley, "I took J. Bray to Mr. Law, who resolved all his experience into fits, or natural affection or fits; and desired him to take no notice of his comforts, which he had better be without, than have. He blamed Mr. Whitefield's Journal and way of proceeding; said, he had great hopes that the Methodists would have been dispersed by little and little, into livings, and have leavened the whole lump. I told him my experience: 'then,' said he, 'I am far

below you (if you are right) not worthy to wipe your shoes.' He agreed to our notion of faith, but would have it, that all men held it. He was fully against the laymen's expounding, as the very worst thing both for themselves and others. I told him he was my schoolmaster to bring me to Christ; but the reason why I did not come sooner to Christ was, I sought to be sanctified before I was justified. I disclaimed all expectation of becoming some GREAT ONE. Among other things he said, 'Were I so talked of, as Mr. Whitefield is, I should run away, and hide myself entirely.' I answered, 'you might, but God would bring you back, like Jonah.' He told me, joy in the Holy Ghost was the most dangerous thing God could give. I replied, 'but cannot God guard his own gifts?' He often disclaimed advising us, seeing we had the Spirit of God: but mended on our hands, and at last came almost quite over to us."

It is really wonderful that Mr. Law should talk in this manner! He who wrote the spirit of prayer, the spirit of love, and an address to the clergy, besides many other pieces, in which he shows, with great force of reasoning, that a person can have no true religion, without a supernatural influence of the Spirit of God upon his mind; in which he certainly lays a foundation for christian experience.

August 12th, He observes, "I received great power to explain the good Samaritan: communicated at St. Paul's, as I do every Sunday: convinced multitudes at Kennington-common, from, 'Such were some of you, but ye are washed, &c.' And before the day was past, felt my own sinfulness so great, that I wished I had never been born."

August 13th, Mr. Wesley wrote to Mr. Seward as follows. "I preached yesterday to more than ten thousand hearers. I am so buffeted both before and after, that were I not forcibly detained, I should fly from every human face. If God does make a way for me to escape, I shall not easily be brought back again. I cannot love advertising; it looks like sounding a trumpet. I hope our brother Hutchins will come forth at last, and throw away my mantle of reserve, which he seems to have taken up."

Mr. Whitefield was now on the point of returning to America, and on the 15th of August Mr. Wesley wrote to him. "Let not Cossart's opinion of your letter to the bishop, weaken your hands. *Abundans cautio nocet:* * it is the Moravian infirmity. To-morrow I set out for Bristol. I pray you may all have a good voyage, and that many poor souls may be added to the church by your ministry, before we meet again. Meet again I am confident we shall, perhaps both

* *Too much caution is hurtful.* Some persons perhaps may think, that neither Mr. Whitefield, nor any of them stood in need of this admonition; of this, however, we are not very proper judges at this distance of time. It is evident that on many occasions they did use much caution. Mr. Wesley speaks as though he had some thoughts of going again to America, and he mentions such intentions in several places; but they never came to anything fixed and determined.

here and in America. The will of the Lord be done, with us and by us, in time and in eternity!"

CHAPTER VI.

SECTION V.

CONTAINING SOME ACCOUNT OF MR. CHARLES WESLEY'S LABORS AS AN ITINERANT PREACHER.

August 16th, Mr. Wesley entered on the itinerant plan. He rode to Wickham, and being denied the church, would have preached in a private house; but Mr. Bowers having been preaching there in the streets, had raised great opposition, and effectually shut the door against him. The next day he went to Oxford, and the day following reached Evesham. After being here two or three days, he wrote to his brother as follows.

"Dear Brother,

"We left the brethren at Oxford much edified, and two gownsmen thoroughly awakened. On Saturday afternoon God brought us hither, Mr. Seward being from home, there was no admission for us, his wife being an opposer, and having refused to see Mr. Whitefield before me. At seven in the evening Mr. Seward found us at the inn, and took us home. At eight I expounded in the school-room, which holds about two hundred persons.—On Sunday morning I preached from George Whitefield's pulpit, the wall, on, "Repent ye and believe the gospel." The notice being short, we had only a few hundreds, but such as those described in the morning lesson, 'These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind.' In the evening I showed, to near two thousand hearers, their Saviour in the good Samaritan.—Once more God strengthened me, at nine, to open the new covenant, at the school-house, which was crowded with deeply attentive sinners."

He goes on. "August 20th, I spoke from Acts ii. 37, to two or three hundred market people and soldiers, all as orderly and decent as could be desired.—I now heard, that the mayor had come down on Sunday, to take a view of us. Soon after, an officer struck a countryman in the face, without any provocation. A serious woman besought the poor man, not to resist evil, as the other only wanted to make a riot. He took patiently several repeated blows, telling the officer, he might beat him as long as he pleased."

"To-day Mr. Seward's cousin told us of a young lady, who was here on a visit, and had been deeply affected on Sunday night under the word, seeing and feeling her need of a physician, and earnestly desired me to pray for her.—After dinner I spoke with her. She burst into tears, and told us, she had come hither thoughtless, dead in pleasures and sin, and fully resolved against ever being a Methodist. That she was first alarmed about her own state, by seeing us so happy and full of love: had gone to the society, but was not thoroughly awakened to a knowledge of herself, till the word came home to her soul. That all the following night she had been in an agony and distress; could not pray, could not bear our singing, nor have any rest in her spirit. We betook ourselves to prayer for her; she received forgiveness, and triumphed in the Lord her God."

August 23d. "By ten last night we reached Gloucester, through many dangers and difficulties. In mounting my horse I fell over him, and sprained my hand: riding in the dark I bruised my foot: we lost our way as often as we could: there were only two horses between three of us: when we had got to Gloucester, we were turned back from a friend's house, on account of his wife's sickness: and my voice and strength were quite gone. To-day they are in some measure restored. At night I with difficulty got into the crowded society, where I preached the law and the gospel, which they received with all readiness. Three clergymen were present. Some without, attempted to make a disturbance, but in vain."

August 25th. "Before I went into the streets and highways, I sent, according to my custom, to borrow the use of the church. The minister, being one of the better disposed, sent back a civil message, that he would be glad to drink a glass of wine with me, but durst not lend me his pulpit for fifty guineas. Mr. Whitefield* however, durst lend me his field, which did just as well. For near an hour and half, God gave me voice and strength to exhort about two thousand sinners, to repent and believe the gospel.—Being invited to Painswick, I waited upon the Lord, and renewed my strength. We found near a thousand persons gathered in the street. I discoursed from, God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. I besought them earnestly to be reconciled, and the *rebels* seemed inclined to lay down their arms. A young Presbyterian teacher cleaved to us."

On returning to Gloucester, Mr. Wesley received an invitation from F. Drummond; he dined with her, and several of the Friends; particularly he mentions "Josiah Martin, a spiritual man," says he, "as far as I can discern. My heart was enlarged, and knit to them in love."—Going in the evening, to preach in the field, Mrs. Kirkman, an old and intimate acquaintance, whose son had been with him and his brother at Oxford, put herself in his way; and

* I suppose a brother of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield.

addressed him, with, "What, Mr. Wesley, is it you I see! is it possible that you, who can preach at Christ-church, St. Mary's, &c. should come hither after a mob!" He gave her a short answer, and went to his mob; or to put it in the phrase of the Pharisees, to this people, which is accursed. Thousands heard him gladly, while he explained the blessings and privileges of the gospel, and exhorted all to come to Christ as lost sinners that they might enjoy them. I cannot but observe here, that the more ignorant and wicked the common people were at this time, the greater was the charity and kindness of those who endeavored to instruct them in their duty to God and man, and by this means reform their manners. The reader will easily perceive, that it required no small degree of resolution, to expose himself to the ignorant rudeness of the lowest of the people, to the contemptuous sneers of those of respectability and influence, and to the severe censures of his particular friends. Yet this, both he, his brother, and Mr. Whitefield did, in adopting the plan of itinerant preaching. It is almost impossible to imagine, that in their circumstances, they could act from any other motive, than a pure desire of doing good. Travelling from place to place, and every where preaching in the open air, was a plan of proceeding well adapted to diffuse knowledge among the common people, and to awaken a concern for religion. But it was extraordinary and new; and the novelty of it would naturally engage the attention of the public so much, that few persons would, at first, form a true judgment of its importance, and the difficulties and hardships attending it. Had these two points been considered and rightly understood, I am persuaded that neither Mr. Charles Wesley, nor his brother, nor Mr. Whitefield, would have been blamed for adopting the plan of itinerancy, and preaching in the open air; on the contrary they would have been commended by every person of a liberal mind. At present, I shall only hint at one or two particulars, to show the importance of their proceedings, and the hardships they had to encounter. The laboring poor are the most numerous class of people in every country. They are not less necessary to the happiness and prosperity of a nation, than the higher orders of society. At the period of which I am now speaking, their education was almost wholly neglected; and as they advanced in years, they had fewer opportunities of instruction and less capacity for it, than those who had received a better education, and had more leisure. The public discourses of the regular clergy, had little or no influence upon this class of people; as many of them never went to church, and most of those who did, neither understood, nor felt themselves interested, in what the preachers delivered from the pulpit. Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. Nor was there any prospect of doing them good, except by some extraordinary method of proceeding, as their ignorance and vicious habits, placed them beyond

the reach of any salutary influence from the ordinary means of improvement appointed by government. But it certainly is a matter of national importance, that so large a body of people as the laboring poor, should be instructed in the principles of religion, and have the way to happiness, both here and hereafter, pointed out to them, in such a manner as to engage their attention, and inform their understandings. A true knowledge of religion enlarges and strengthens the faculties of their minds, and prepares them for a due performance of every duty religious and civil. It opens to their view sources of happiness unknown to them before; it teaches them to form a true estimate of their privileges and blessings temporal and spiritual; to view affliction, not as peculiar to their situation, but as infinitely diversified, and distributed for wise purposes, through all the orders of society; thus it leads them on to contentment and happiness in their humble situations, and disposes them to industry and peace, by which they largely contribute to the prosperity and happiness of the nation. Viewing the effects of itinerant preaching in this point of light, we see its importance, and must acknowledge that the authors of it deserve great praise; especially as they introduced it by their own example, under many difficulties and hardships. Their prospects in life, from their learning, their abilities, and their rank in society, were all sacrificed to the plan of itinerancy. In all human appearance, they had every thing to lose by it; reputation, health, and the esteem of their friends; and nothing in this world to gain, but great bodily fatigue, ill usage from the mob, and general contempt. As only three persons united together at first in the plan of itinerancy, they could not expect to form any extensive or very permanent establishment. It was impossible to conceive that the seed they were sowing, would produce so plentiful a crop of lay-preachers as we have seen spring up from it, without whom the work must have been very limited indeed. But it is very evident that these three servants of God, did not look forward to any very distant consequences of their present proceedings; they contented themselves with performing a present duty, and doing as much good as possible in the way which opened before them, committing themselves and their work to God, who has taken good care of them.

Mr. Wesley pursued his plan, and on the 26th of August was at Painswick. The minister was so obliging as to lend him his pulpit. But the church would not hold the people; it was supposed there were two thousand persons in the church-yard. Mr. Wesley stood at a window which was taken down, and preached to the congregation within the walls, and without. They listened with eager attention, while he explained, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," &c.

"In the afternoon," says he, "I preached again to a Kennington congregation. It was the most beautiful sight I ever beheld. The

people filled the gradually rising area, which was shut up on three sides by a vast hill. On the top and bottom of this hill, was a great row of trees. In this amphitheatre the people stood deeply attentive, while I called upon them in Christ's words, 'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' The tears of many testified, that they were ready to enter into that rest. It was with difficulty we made our way through this most loving people, and returned amidst their prayers and blessings to Ebly, where I expounded the second lesson for two hours."

A good old Baptist had invited Mr. Wesley to preach at Stanley, in his way to Bristol. Accordingly, on the 27th, he rode thither through the rain, and preached to about a thousand attentive hearers; they were so much affected by the sermon, that he appointed them to meet him again in the evening. I mention with pleasure, these instances of persons among the Friends, the Presbyterians, and the Baptists, who showed a friendly disposition to Mr. Wesley, and countenanced his proceedings. Their conduct discovers a stronger attachment to the essential doctrines of the gospel, than to the peculiarities of opinion and modes of worship, in which they differed from him and from one another; and marks a liberality of sentiment, which reflects honor on the different denominations of Christians to which they belonged.

He returned to Mr. Ellis's at Ebly. This was a most agreeable family; every one having received the faith, except one young man who still remained an abandoned sinner. His mother mourned and lamented over him, with parental affection and religious concern. Mr. Oakley, who travelled with Mr. Wesley, now informed him that he had been able to fasten some degree of conviction of sin on the young man's mind. His convictions and seriousness were increased by Mr. Wesley's sermon. By persevering prayer he was brought to the knowledge of God, and received peace and joy in believing. Mr. Wesley adds, "Sing ye heavens for the Lord hath done it; shout ye lower parts of the earth! In the morning I had told his mother the story of St. Austin's conversion: now I carried her the joyful news, 'This thy son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

He arrived in Bristol, August 28th; and his brother having set out for London, on the 31st he entered on his ministry at Weaver's Hall. "I began," says he, "by expounding Isaiah with great freedom. They were melted into tears all around; and again when the bands met to keep the Church-fast. We were all of one heart and of one mind. I forgot the contradiction wherewith they grieved my soul in London, and could not forbear saying, 'It is good for me to be here.'"

The places where Mr. Wesley had now to preach, in Bristol, Kingswood, and the neighborhood, were numerous; and he seldom passed a day without preaching or expounding, two or three times. The con-

gregations were large, and his word was with power; so that many testified daily, that the gospel is the power of God to salvation to all who believe. September the 4th, he preached in Kingswood to some thousands, colliers chiefly, and held out the promises from Isaiah xxxv; "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." He adds, "I triumphed in the mercy of God to these poor outcasts, (for he hath called them a people who were not a people) and in the accomplishment of that scripture, 'Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.' How gladly do the poor receive the gospel! We hardly knew how to part."

September 5th. "I was much discouraged by a discovery of the disorderly walking of some, who have given the adversary occasion to blaspheme. I am a poor creature upon such occasions, being soon cast down. Yet I went and talked to them, and God filled me with such love to their souls as I have not known before. They could not stand before it. I joined with Oakley and Cennick in prayer for them. M. trembled exceedingly: the others gave us great cause to hope for their recovery."

"September the 7th, at Weaver's Hall, I expounded the third chapter of Isaiah, where the prophet alike condemns notorious profligates, worldly-minded men, and well-dressed ladies." By well-dressed ladies, Mr. Wesley certainly meant much more than the phrase imports. He doubtless had in view, a fanciful, useless, expensive conformity to the changeable modes of dress; which is unbecoming, if not criminal, in a person professing godliness. The prophet is there speaking of ladies of the first rank in the kingdom; he mentions paint, a variety of useless ornaments, and a mode of dress hardly consistent with modesty.* What added to their guilt was, that, while thy were adorning themselves in every fanciful and wanton method they could invent, the poor of the land were oppressed beyond measure; and God denounces heavy judgments against them for their oppression and wantonness. It has often been said, by persons too fond of dress, that religion does not consist in the peculiar shape or cut of our clothes. This undoubtedly is true. But when the mode of dress is voluntary, and regulated purely by choice, it is a picture, which gives a visible representation of the temper and disposition of the mind. The choice of our dress, like the choice of our amusements or companions, discovers what kind of objects are most pleasing and gratifying to us. The case is very different where the mode of dress is characteristic of a profession, or where a woman is under the control of her husband.

September 11th. He rode with two friends to Bradford, near Bath,

* See Bishop Lowth, on the third chapter of Isaiah.

and preached to about a thousand persons who seemed deeply affected. On the 15th he says, "Having been provoked to speak unadvisedly with my lips, I preached on the Bowling-green in great weakness, on, 'Lazarus, come forth!' I was surprised that any good should be done. But God quickens others by those who are dead themselves. A man came to me and declared he had now received the spirit of life; and so did a woman at the same time, which she openly declared at Weaver's Hall. We had great power among us while I displayed the believer's privileges from the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. On the 16th, I met between thirty and forty colliers, with their wives, at Mr. Willis's, and administered the sacrament to them; but found no comfort myself, in that or any other ordinance. I always find strength for the work of the ministry; but when my work is over, my bodily and spiritual strength both leave me. I can pray for others, not for myself. God, by me, strengthens the weak hands, and confirms the feeble knees; yet am I as a man in whom is no strength. I am weary and faint in my mind, continually longing to be discharged."—Soon after, however, he found power to pray for himself, and confessed it was good for him to be in desertion. He was greatly strengthened and comforted by opening his Bible on Isaiah liv. 7, 8. "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."

Many persons now came to him for advice daily, who had been, either awakened or justified under his ministry. This greatly increased his labor, but it strengthened his hands for the work in which he was engaged. September 25th. He preached again at Bradford, to about two thousand hearers. "I described," says he, "their state by nature and grace. I did not spare those who were whole, and had no need of a physician. They bore it surprisingly. I received invitations to several neighboring towns. May I never run before God's call, nor stay one moment after it. We baited at a good Dissenter's near Bath, who seems to have the root of the matter in him." The next day, two persons came to him who had been clearly convinced of sin, and received peace and joy in believing; but they had never been baptized. On this occasion Mr. Wesley observes, "I now require no further proof, that one may be an inward Christian without baptism. They are both desirous of it; and who can forbid water?"

"Sarah Pearce declares, that she first received comfort on hearing me explain the fifth chapter of the Romans. She had the witness of her own spirit, or conscience, that all the marks I mentioned were upon her; and the Spirit of God, with his testimony, put it beyond the possibility of a doubt. Some of her words were; 'I was extremely bigoted against my brethren the Dissenters, but am now enlarged towards them and all mankind, in an inexpressible manner. I do not

depend upon a start of comfort; but find it increase ever since it began. I perceive a great change in myself; and expect a greater. I feel a divine attraction in my soul to heavenly things. I was once so afraid of death that I durst not sleep, but now I do not fear it at all. I desire nothing on earth; I fear nothing, but sin. God suffers me to be strongly tempted; but I know, where he gives faith he will try it.' See here the true assurance of faith! How consistent! An humble, not doubting faith; a filial, not servile fear of offending. I desire not such an assurance as blots out these scriptures, 'Be not high-minded, but fear:' 'work out your salvation with fear and trembling,' &c. God keep me in constant fear, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away."

"I spoke plainly to the women bands, of their unadvisedness, their want of love, and not bearing one another's burdens. We found an immediate effect. Some were convinced they had thought too highly of themselves; and that their first love, like their first joy, was only a foretaste of that temper which continually rules in a new heart."

Though there had been no riots, nor any open persecution of the Methodists in Bristol; yet many individuals, who became serious and changed the whole course of their lives, suffered considerably. This was partly occasioned by the inflammatory discourses of some of the clergy, who represented them as Papists, Jesuits, friends of the Pretender, &c. On this subject, Mr. Wesley makes the following observations. "Christianity flourishes under the cross. None who follow Christ are without that badge of discipleship. Wives and children are beaten and turned out of doors; and the persecutors are the complainers. It is always the lamb that troubles the waters. Every Sunday, damnation is denounced against all who hear us: for we are 'Papists, Jesuits, seducers, and bringers-in of the Pretender.' The clergy murmur aloud at the number of communicants, and threaten to repel them. Yet will not the world bear that we should talk of persecution: no, for 'the world now is christian! and the offence of the cross has ceased.' Alas! what would they do further? Some lose their bread; some their habitations: One suffers stripes, another confinement; yet we must not call this persecution. Doubtless they will find some other name for it, when they shall think they do God service by killing us."

October 8th. He preached at the brick-yard. A Mr. Williams, from Kidderminster, who had written to Mr. Wesley some time before to go down thither, was present, and much edified and strengthened by the sermon. "I know not," says Mr. Wesley, "of what denomination he is, nor is it material; for he has the mind which was in Christ."

Mr. Wesley's sermon, when last at Bradford, had been misunderstood or misrepresented. It was reported that he was a high Calvinist, and great pains had been taken to represent him as such. His

brother Mr. John Wesley, coming to Bristol this evening, it was the opinion of both that he ought to preach again at Bradford, and declare his sentiments openly on this point. The next day, October the 9th,* they went to Bradford, where Mr. Charles Wesley preached to a congregation of about two thousand people. Mr. John Wesley prayed first, when Mr. Charles began abruptly, "If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for US ALL, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things." He spake with great boldness and freedom for an hour and a half, holding forth Christ a Saviour for all men. He flattered himself that he had done so much injury to satan's kingdom, by beating down sin, that he says, "I believe he will no more slander me with being a Predestinarian" in the modern notion of that word.

October 11th. He preached for the first time in the open air by night, in a yard belonging to a widow Jones. He observes, "The yard contained about four hundred persons; the house was likewise full. Great power was in the midst of us. Satan blasphemed without, but durst not venture his children too near the gospel, when I offered Christ Jesus to them. The enemy hurried them away, and all we could do, was to pray for them."

"October 15th. I waited, with my brother, on a minister about baptizing some of his parishioners. He complained heavily of the multitudes of our communicants, and produced the canon against strangers. He could not admit as a reason for their coming to his church, that they had no sacrament at their own. I offered my assistance to lesson his trouble, but he declined it. He told us there were hundreds of new communicants last Sunday. We bless God for this cause of offence, and pray it may never be removed."

"October 19th. I read part of Mr. Law on regeneration to our society. How promising the beginning, and how lame the conclusion! Christianity, he rightly tells us, is a recovery of the Divine image; and a Christian is, a fallen spirit restored, and re-instated in paradise; a living mirror of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. After this he supposes it possible for him to be insensible of such a change: to be happy and holy, translated into Eden, renewed in the likeness of God, and not to know it. Nay we are not to expect, nor bid others expect any such consciousness, if we listen to him. What wretched inconsistency!"

When Mr. Wesley baptized adults, professing faith in Christ, he chose to do it by trine immersion, if the persons would submit to it; judging this to be the apostolic method of baptizing. October 26th, He says, "I baptized Mr. Wigginton in the river, by Baptist-mills, and went on my way rejoicing to French-Hay. October 27th, I took occasion to show the degeneracy of our modern Pharisees. Their

* See the agreement between this account and Mr. John Wesley's printed Journal in his Works, vol. xxvii. page 142.

predecessors fasted twice a week; but they maintain their character for holiness at a cheaper rate. In reverence for the Church, some keep their public day on Friday: none regard it, though enjoined as a fast. Their neglect is equally notorious in regard to prayer and the sacrament. And yet these men cry out, 'THE CHURCH, THE CHURCH!' when they themselves will not hear the Church; but despise her authority, trample upon her orders, teach contrary to her articles and homilies, and break her canons, even every man of those, who of late pretend to enforce their observance."

"October 13th, I wrote to the Bishop of Bristol, as follows:

"MY LORD,

"Several persons have applied to me for baptism.* It has pleased God to make me instrumental in their conversion. This has given them such a prejudice for me, that they desire to be received into the Church by my ministry. They choose likewise to be baptized by immersion, and have engaged me to give your lordship notice, as the Church requires."

"November 2. I received a summons from Oxford, to respond in divinity disputations; which, together with other concurrent providences, is a plain call to that place."

On the 6th, Mr. Wesley's Journal breaks off, and does not commence again till March 14th, 1740. Mr. John Wesley informs us, that he and his brother left Oxford on the 15th of November, and taking Bristol in their way, they arrived at Tiverton on the 21st, a few days after the funeral of their brother Samuel. Having preached at Exeter during their short stay in these parts, they returned to Bristol on the 28th of the same month.

March 14th, 1740, Mr. Wesley came to Gloucester, in company with Thomas Maxfield, who travelled with him most part of this year. The next day he went to Bengeworth, in hopes of seeing his old friend, Mr. Benjamin Seward. But here he met with a disappointment, which he did not expect. Mr. Seward had been ill of a fever. His relations taking advantage of his situation had intercepted all his letters: they called his fever madness; and now, when he was recovering, placed his servants over him as spies, to prevent any Methodist from coming to him. His brother, Mr. Henry, came to Mr. Wesley and gave him plenty of abuse, calling him scoundrel, rascal, pick-pocket, &c. Mr. Wesley made little reply, but ordered notice to be given that he would preach next day, March 16th, at the usual place, which was near Mr. Seward's house. Mr. Henry came to him to dissuade him from attempting it, telling him that four constables were ordered to apprehend him if he came near his brother's wall. Mr. Wesley however was not to be deterred from his purpose by such threatenings, and when the time of preaching drew near,

* He mentioned the names of seven persons.

walked forward towards the place. In his way thither, a mayor's officer met him, and desired he would go with him to the mayor. Mr. Wesley answered, that he would first wait on his LORD, and then on the mayor, whom he reverenced for the sake of his office. Mr. Henry now met him with threatenings and revilings. Mr. Wesley began singing, "Shall I for fear of feeble man," &c. This enraged Mr. Henry, who ran about raving like a madman, and quickly got some fellows fit for his purpose. These laid hold on Mr. Wesley, who asked, by what authority they did it? Where was their warrant? Let them show that and he would save them the trouble of using violence. They said they had no warrant, but he should not preach there, and dragged him away amidst the cries of the people. Mr. Henry cried out, "Take him away, and duck him." "I broke out," says Mr. Wesley, "into singing, with Thomas Maxfield, and suffered them to carry me whither they pleased. At the bridge in the lane they left me: then I stood out of the liberty of the corporation, and gave out,

> 'Angel of God, whate'er betide,
> Thy summons I obey!' &c.

Some hundreds followed, whom they could not hinder from hearing me, on, 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' Never did I feel so much what I spoke, and the word did not return empty.

"I then waited on Mr. Mayor, the poor sincere ones following me trembling. He was a little warm at my not coming before. I gave him the reason, and added, that I knew of no law of God or man, which I had transgressed; but if there was any such law, I desired no favor. He said, he should not have denied me leave to preach, even in his own yard; but Mr. Henry Seward, and the apothecary, had assured him, it would quite cast his brother down again. I answered, it would tend to restore him. Here a clergyman spoke much —and nothing. As far as I could pick out his meaning, he grumbled that Mr. Whitefield had spoken against the clergy in his Journal. I told him, if he were a carnal, worldly-minded clergyman, I might do what he would call railing, I might warn God's people to beware of false prophets. I did not say, because I did not know, he was one of those shepherds who fed themselves, not the flock; but if he was, I was sorry for him, and must leave that sentence of Chrysostom with him, 'Hell is paved with the skulls of christian priests.' I turned from him, and asked the mayor whether he approved of the treatment I had met with? He said, 'by no means, and if I complained, he would bind the men over to answer it at the Sessions.' I told him, I did not complain, neither would I prosecute them, as they well knew. I assured him, that I waited on him, not from interest, for I wanted nothing; not from fear, for I had done no wrong; but from true respect, and to show him that I believed, 'The powers that be are ordained of God.'"

March 17th, he preached again, when a troop poured in upon him and the quiet congregation, and made much disturbance. "I enjoyed," says he, "a sweet calm within, even while I preached the gospel with much contention. These slighter conflicts must fit me for greater." The next day, before preaching, he received a message from the minister, informing him that if he did not immediately quit the town, Mr. Henry Seward could easily raise a mob, and then he must look to himself. Mr. Canning, and others of his friends, dissuaded him from going to the society, for his enemies were determined to do him a mischief, which they thought he should avoid by going out of the way for a while. But Mr. Wesley was not intimidated by threatenings. He adds, "I went, and set upon the opposers. I bid them to rejoice and glory, for now they had terrified me; I was really afraid—to leave Evesham: I durst no more do it, than forsake my Captain, or deny my Master, while any one of them opened his mouth against the truth. No man answered a word, or offered to disturb me in my following exhortation. I received great comfort from those words in the first lesson, 'Then the men of the city said unto Joash, Bring out thy son, that he may die, because he hath cast down the altar of Baal. And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? If he be a god let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar.' In the afternoon there was none to plead for him, or to molest me in the work of God, while I showed God's method of saving souls; 'For he maketh sore and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hand maketh whole.' The tears that were shed gave comfortable evidence that I had not labored in vain."

Mr. Wesley went from hence to Westcot, Idbury, and Oxford, where he labored with his usual success. He then returned to Evesham, saw his friend Mr. Benjamin Seward, and preached without molestation. April 3d, he arrived in London, and preached at the Foundery, on, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." He observes, "My heart was enlarged in prayer for the infant society."

The society in London was at this time terribly distracted with foolish and hurtful disputations. Mr. Bray, one Bell, and several others who had influence among the people, had imbibed a notion from Molther, the Moravian, that there are no degrees of faith, that he who has any doubt has no faith at all; that there are no means of grace, but Christ; that a believer is under no obligation to use the ordinances; that an unbeliever ought to be *still*, and neither read the Scriptures, nor pray, nor use any of the ordinances; because he cannot do these things without trusting in them, and that would hinder him from receiving faith, &c. Mr. Wesley opposed these teachers with great firmness and perseverance. His journal, during his stay in London, is filled with disputations on these subjects, which I shall not transcribe. The following particulars, as they throw some light

on the state of things at this time, and on the success of Mr. Wesley's ministry, seem worthy of being preserved.

April 16th, he received the following letter. "I beg leave to ask your opinion about my state. I do not doubt myself; for through the grace given me, I am confident, God for Christ's sake has forgiven my sins, and made me free. But it has been questioned whether I have faith or not.

"I was brought up an heathen in the house of a D. D. After that I went to the Lord's table, and then thought myself a good Christian. But blessed be God I now see that I was an abominable Pharisee. For my pride God cast me out of his house, and I fell into the foulest crimes I could commit. After some time I had a sight of my damnable estate, and that I was nothing but sin: I daily dreaded God's vengeance: I durst not offer to pray, knowing my prayer was an abomination to that God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. I could not think it possible there should be forgiveness for me:

'I had my punishment in view,
I felt a thousand hells my due.'

I went twice to hear Mr. Whitefield, but thought it did not signify. My misery still increased. But it pleased God, that the last time you preached at Kennington, my blessed Saviour was revealed in me, in so glorious a manner, that I rather thought myself in heaven than on earth. I thought I could meet death with boldness. I was ready to cry out to every one, O! taste and see how good the Lord is. I would not for a thousand worlds be in my former state again. May God prolong your life and health, in his kingdom and service."

Hitherto the government of the society had been vested wholly in the people. At their different meetings, they made such rules and orders as they thought necessary and proper, without paying any particular deference to the ministers. In one or two instances, mentioned in these journals, they threatened to expel Mr. Wesley himself, when he did not conform to the rules they had made. But on the 20th of April this year, it was agreed, 1. That no order should be valid unless the minister be present at the making of it. 2. That, whosoever denies the ordinances to be commands, shall be expelled the society.

One or two of the leaders in this new doctrine concerning ordinances and means of grace, thinking Mr. John Wesley more favorable to their opinions than Mr. Charles, wrote to him at Bristol, desiring him to come immediately to London. He arrived on the 22d,* and on the 24th, Mr. Charles Wesley wrote to a friend at Bristol as follows. "My brother came most critically. The snare we trust will now be broken, and many simple souls be delivered. Many here insist, that a part of their christian calling is liberty from obeying, not liberty to

* See also Mr. John Wesley's printed Journal in his Works, vol. xxvii. p. 205.

obey. The unjustified, say they, are to *be still;* that is, not to search the Scriptures, not to pray, not to communicate, not to do good, not to endeavor, not to desire; for it is impossible to use means without trusting in them. Their practice is agreeable to their principles. Lazy and proud themselves, bitter and censorious towards others, they trample upon the ordinances and despise the commands of Christ. I see no middle point wherein we can meet."

May 2d, Mr. Wesley received the following letter.

"My Reverend Father in Christ,

"I first received the gift of faith after I had seen myself a lost sinner, bound with a thousand chains, and dropping into hell. Then I heard his voice, 'Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.' I saw the son of God loved me, and gave himself for me. I thought I saw him at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for me. I went on in great joy for four months. Then pride crept in, and I thought the work was finished, when it was but just begun. There I rested, and in a little time fell into doubts and fears, whether my sins were really forgiven me, till I plunged myself into the depth of misery. I could not pray, neither had I any desire to do it, or to read the word. Then did I see my own evil heart, and feel my helplessness, so that I could not so much as think a good thought. My love was turned into hatred, passion, envy, &c. I felt a thousand hells my due, and cried out in bitter anguish of spirit, 'Save Lord, or I perish.' In my last extremity I saw my Saviour full of grace and truth for me, and heard his voice again, whispering, Peace, be still. My peace returned, and greater sweetness of love than I ever knew before. Now my joy is calm and solid, my heart drawn out to the Lord continually. I know that my Redeemer liveth for me. He is my strength and my rock, and will carry on his work in my soul to the day of redemption. Dear sir, I have spoken the state of my heart as before the Lord. I beg your prayers, that I may go on from strength to strength, from conquering to conquer, till death is swallowed up in victory."

"G. Murray."

May 8, H. Harris being in town, Mr. Wesley observes, "He declared his experience before the society. O! what a flame was kindled. No man speaks in my hearing as this man speaketh. What a nursing father God has sent us! He has indeed learned of the good Shepherd to carry the lambs in his bosom. Such love, such power, such simplicity, was irresistible." At this meeting H. Harris invited all lost sinners, justified or not justified, to the Lord's table. "I would not," said he, "for ten thousand worlds, be the man who should keep any from it. There I first found him myself: that is the place of meeting." "He went on," adds Mr. Wesley, "in the power of the Most High. God called forth his witnesses; several declared they had found Christ in the ordinances."

May 29th. "I dined," says Mr. Wesley, "at friend Keen's, a Quaker and a Christian; and read over George Whitefield's account of God's dealings with him. The love and esteem he expressed for me, filled me with confusion, and brought back my fear, lest after having preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away."

June 11th. To put an end to vain disputings, and to stop the further progress of the hurtful opinions which then prevailed, Mr. John Wesley proposed to new-model the bands, and to put those by themselves, who were still for the ordinances. This proposal raised a great clamor: "The noisy *still* ones," adds Mr. Wesley, "well knew, that hitherto they had carried their point, by wearying out the sincere ones scattered among them, one or two in a band of disputers, who had harassed and sawn them asunder, so that a remnant scarcely was left. Mr. Ingham seconded us, and we obtained that the names should be called over, and as many as were aggrieved, should be put into new bands. We gathered up our wreck, *rari nantes in gurgite vasto*, floating here and there on the vast abyss; for nine out of ten were swallowed up in the dead sea of stillness. O why was not this done six months ago! How fatal was our delay and false moderation. I told them plainly, I should continue with them so long as they continued in the Church of England."

June 17th. "We had an extraordinary meeting of the society, increased from twelve, to three hundred. I took my leave of them with hearty prayer."—The next day he set out for Bristol, where he arrived on the 21st, having called at Oxford in his way thither. "My first greeting at Kingswood," says he, "was by a daughter of one of our colliers. In the evening was at the malt-room, and addressed myself to those in the wilderness. O what simplicity is in this childlike people! A spirit of contrition and love ran through them. Here the seed has fallen upon good ground."

"Sunday, June 22d, I went to learn Christ among our colliers, and drank into their spirit. We rejoiced for the consolation. O that our London brethren, would but come to school to Kingswood! These are, what they of London pretend to be. God knows their poverty; but they are rich, and daily entering into his rest. They do not hold it necessary to deny weak faith in order to get strong. Their souls truly wait upon God, in his ordinances. Ye many masters, come learn Christ of these outcasts; for know, that except ye be converted, and become like these little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.—I met several of those whom I had baptized and found them growing in grace."

"June 30th, I now spent a week at Oxford, to little purpose, but that of obedience to man, for the Lord's sake. In the hall I read my two lectures on the cxxxth Psalm, preaching repentance towards God, and faith in Christ Jesus. But learned Gallio cared for none of these things."

July 16th. Being returned to Bristol, he observes, "While I was meeting the bands, my mouth was opened to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, in words not my own. All trembled before the presence of God. I was forced to cut off a rotten member; but felt such love and pity at the time, as humbled me into the dust. It was, as if one criminal was executing another. We betook ourselves to fervent prayer for him, and the society. The spirit of prayer was poured out upon us, and we returned to the Lord, with weeping and mourning."—See here, the true Apostolical spirit of church discipline.

Many of the colliers, who had been abandoned to every kind of wickedness, even to a proverb, were now become pious and zealous for the things of God. A great number of these, at this time, came to the churches in Bristol on a Lord's-day, for the benefit of the sacrament. But most of the Bristol ministers repelled them from the table, because they did not belong to their parishes. Setting religion aside, common humanity would have taught them to rejoice in so remarkable a reformation among these wretched people. But these watchmen of Israel did not choose to have any increase of trouble. Can we wonder, that the Methodists had such great success in preaching the gospel to the middling and lower orders of the people, when such lazy drones as these, had the care of most of the parishes in England? The case, I believe, is now greatly altered. At present, there is more religious knowledge, more candor, and greater attention to propriety of conduct, both among the clergy and the people, than there was at that time; and the Methodists have been the principal means of producing the change.

July 25. He began to speak to every member of the society in particular. A woman came to him, crying out, that she was born of God; that she had a new heart, &c. But on examination, she could give no account of her faith; no satisfactory proof of her pretensions. Mr. Wesley observes on this occasion, "How exceedingly cautious ought we to be, in receiving people's testimony of themselves." Another came to him, who seems to have been puffed up with her religious comforts and enjoyments. "I plainly see," says he, "why many lose their first comfort; it is expedient for them that it should go away." In this case, as he observes, nature will feed on the gift, instead of the giver. We see some, who look at their joy, and compare their state with others, till they become high-minded, lose sight of Christ, and then sink into great darkness and distress, without perceiving the reason of it. One part of these, generally recover their former experience, after much suffering: another part, content themselves with the externals of religion, and much religious talk, while their passions have the same dominion over them, they formerly had: and a third, look upon all experience as mere imagination, ridicule it in the terms they had been accustomed to use, and cast off

religion altogether. These cases therefore, require the most serious and early attention of every experienced minister of the gospel.

July 27. "I heard a miserable sermon," says Mr. Wesley, "at Temple church, recommending religion as the most likely way to raise a fortune. After sermon, proclamation was made, that all should depart who were not of the parish. While the shepherd was driving away the lambs, I staid, suspecting nothing, till the clerk came to me and said, 'Mr. Beacher bids you go away, for he will not give you the sacrament.' I went to the vestry door, and mildly desired Mr. Beacher to admit me. He asked, 'Are you of this parish?' I answered, 'sir, you see that I am a clergyman.' Then dropping his first pretence, he charged me with rebellion in expounding the Scripture without authority; and said in express words, 'I repel you from the sacrament.' I replied, 'I cite you to answer this, before JESUS CHRIST at the day of judgment.' This enraged him above measure: he called out, 'Here, take away this man.' The constables were ordered to attend, I suppose, lest the furious colliers should take the sacrament by force; but I saved them the trouble of taking away 'this man,' and quietly retired."—These things are but poor evidences, that the Bristol ministers were the true successors of the Apostles!

In August Mr. Wesley had a very dangerous fever. It was reported, and published in the papers, that he was dead. Upon his recovery, he observes, "I found myself after this gracious visitation, more desirous and able to pray; more afraid of sin; more earnestly longing for deliverance, and the fulness of christian salvation." Soon afterwards, two or three of the society died, in the triumph of faith, and full assurance of hope; which strengthened the hands and comforted the hearts of those who were left behind.

September 22d, Mr. Wesley was informed that the colliers were risen; and riding out from Bristol, he met about a thousand of them at Lawrence-hill. The occasion of their rising was the dearness of corn. He went up to an eminence, and began to talk to them. Many seemed inclined to go back with him to the school, which some of the most desperate perceiving, they rushed violently upon the others, beating, tearing, and driving them every way from Mr. Wesley. He adds, "I rode up to a ruffian, who was striking one of our colliers,* and prayed him rather to strike me. He answered, 'no, not for all the world,' and was quite overcome. I turned upon another, who struck my horse, and he also sunk into a lamb. Wherever I turned, satan's cause lost ground, so that they were obliged to make one general assault, and the violent colliers forced the quiet ones into the town. I seized one of the tallest, and earnestly besought him to follow me: yes, he said, that he would, all the world over. I pressed about six into Christ's service. We met several parties, and stopt

* He means a collier, who was in the Methodists' society.

and exhorted them to follow us; and gleaning some from every company, we increased as we marched on singing, to the school. From one till three o'clock, we spent in prayer, that evil might be prevented, and the lion chained. Then news was brought us, that the colliers were returned in peace. They had walked quietly into the city, without sticks or the least violence. A few of the better sort of them went to the mayor, and told their grievance: then they all returned as they came, without noise or disturbance. All who saw it were amazed. Nothing could more clearly have shown the change wrought among them, than this conduct on such an occasion."

"I found afterwards, that all our colliers to a man had been forced away. Having learned of Christ not to resist evil, they went a mile with those who compelled them, rather than free themselves by violence. One man the rioters dragged out of his sick-bed, and threw him into the fish ponds. Near twenty of Mr. Willis's men they had prevailed on, by threatenining to fill up their pits, and bury them alive, if they did not come up and bear them company." It was a happy circumstance that they forced so many of the Methodist colliers to go with them; as these, by their advice and example, would restrain the savage fury of the others. This undoubtedly was the true cause, why they all returned home without making any disturbance.

November 6th, he set out for Wales. Here, vain disputings and janglings about predestination, had done much harm in several societies: even H. Harris, embracing this doctrine, had been greatly estranged from his friend. Any doctrine comes poorly recommended to us, when it almost uniformly diminishes christian love and friendship, in the minds of those who embrace it. This is an effect so contrary to the general end, and manifest tendency of the gospel, that the doctrine which produces it, should be viewed with suspicion and approached with caution. That the diminution of christian love was on the part of H. Harris, is evident from the following letter, which Mr. Wesley sent him from Cardiff, on the 10th of November.

"My dearest Friend and Brother,

"In the name of Jesus Christ, I beseech you, if you have his glory and the good of souls at heart, to come immediately to meet me here. I trust we shall never be two, in time or in eternity. O! my brother, I am grieved that satan should get a moment's advantage over us; and am ready to lay my neck under your feet for Christ's sake. If your heart be as my heart, hasten, in the name of our dear Lord, to your second self."

This letter shows a mind susceptible of the strongest attachments of friendship, and does Mr. Wesley great honor. Howel Harris however, did not come to him till the 18th, when he was at Lantrissant, and preparing to leave Wales. Mr. Wesley adds, "All misunder-

standing vanished at the sight of each other, and our hearts were knit together as at the beginning. Before the society met, several persons were with me, desiring that as I had now got him I would reprove him openly. Some wanted me to preach against lay-preaching; some against predestination, &c. In my discourse, a gentleman, who had come thither on purpose, interrupted me by desiring I would now speak to Mr. Harris, since I was sent for to disprove his errors. I quashed all further importunity by declaring, 'I am unwilling to speak of my brother Harris, because when I begin, I know not where to leave off, and should say so much good of him as some of you could not bear.'"

Before Mr. Wesley left Wales, a violent opposition was raised against him, which threatened danger. During the sermon on Sunday, while Mr. Wesley was describing the state of the Pharisee, a physician of the place found himself hurt, and got up and walked out of the church. On the Tuesday following, being unusually heated with wine, and urged on by a company of players, determined on mischief, he came to the house where the people were assembled, to demand satisfaction for the injury he supposed that he had received. He struck Mr. Wesley and several of the women with his cane, and raged like a madman, till the men forced him out of the room, and shut the door. Soon after, it was broke open by a justice of the peace, and the bailiff, or head magistrate. "The latter began expostulating with me," says Mr. Wesley, "upon the affront offered the doctor. He said as it was a public injury, I ought to make him a public satisfaction. I answered, 'Mr. Bailiff, I honor you for your office' sake; but were you, or his Majesty King George among my hearers, I should tell you both, that you are by nature sinners, or children of wrath, even as others. In the church while preaching, I have no superior but God, and shall not ask man leave to tell him of his sins. As a ruler, it is your duty to be a terror to evil doers, but a praise to them that do well.' Upon thus speaking to him, he became exceedingly civil, assured me of his good will, and that he had come to prevent me from being insulted, and no one should touch a hair of my head."

"While we were talking, the doctor made another attempt to break in and get at me, but the two justices and others, with much trouble got him away; and we continued our triumph in the name of the Lord our God. The shout of a king was among us. We sang unconcerned, though the players had beset the house, were armed, and threatened to burn it. The ground of their quarrel with me was, that the preaching of the gospel had starved them. We prayed and sang with great tranquillity till one in the morning: then I lay down till three. I rose again, and was scarcely got into the room when they discovered a player just by me, who had stolen in unobserved. They seized him, and F. Farley wrested the sword from him. There

was no need of drawing it, for the point and blade were stript of the scabbard, about an hand's breadth. Great was our rejoicing within, and the uproar of the players without. My female advisers were by no means for my venturing out, but wished me to defer my journey. I preferred Mr. Wells's advice, of going with him through the midst of our enemies. We called on the poor creature they had secured. On sight of me he cried out, 'Indeed Mr. Wesley, I did not intend to do you any harm.' 'That,' I answered, 'was best known to God and his own heart;' but told him that my principle was to return good for evil, and therefore desired he might be released. I assured him of my good wishes, and with Mr. Wells walked down to the water side, no man forbidding me." The next day, November the 20th, he arrived safe in Bristol.

He goes on. "November 30th, I gave the sacrament to our sister Taylor, dying in triumph. Here is another witness to the truth of the gospel we preach. Commend me to a religion, upon which I can trust my soul, while entering into eternity."

"December 2d, I preached on the three-fold office of Christ, at Kingswood, but never with greater power. It constrained even the separatists (the Calvinists) to own that God was with us of a truth. I rode back in a glorious storm of thunder, lightning and rain; my spirit rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. He opened my mouth again in the society, and I spoke in much grief, of our desolate mother, the Church of England. My heart yearns towards her, when I think upon her ruins; and it pitieth me to see her in the dust."

"December 5th, I was much refreshed in spirit among some of my friends the Quakers, by a writer of theirs, who strongly insists on the perfect death unto sin, and life unto righteousness, which every Christian experiences. Death must precede life, and condemnation, justification. This he as clearly teaches as any of our first reformers."

December 24th, he set out, with Thomas Maxfield, for London, where they arrived the next day. On the 27th, he says, "Six or seven hundred of us met from eleven o'clock till one, to praise God with the voice of joy and thanksgiving. He hath done great things for us already; but we shall see greater things than these. I dined at the house of a Dissenter, who was armed cap-a-pie with her faith of adherence, brimfull of the five points, and going on to the perfection described in Romans the seventh. On the 28th, I earnestly warned the bands not to fancy they had new hearts before they had seen the deceitfulness of the old; not to think they would ever be above the necessity of prayer; not to yield for one moment to the spirit of judging. Mr. Aspernel told me strange things, and I fear true, of some new creatures of their own making, who have been caught in gross lies."

April 4th, 1741. Mr. Wesley set out for Bristol, and arrived there

in safety the next day. April 7th, he says, "I prayed by one supposed to be at the point of death. He rejoiced to meet the king of terrors; and appeared so sweetly resigned, so ready for the bridegroom, that I longed to change places with him. April 11th, found a dying sinner rejoicing in God her Saviour. At sight of me, she cried out, 'O how loving is God to me! But he is loving to every man: he loves every soul as well as he loves mine.' Many like words she uttered in triumphant faith, and witnessed in death the universal love of Jesus Christ." April 12th, To-day he called forth another of his dying witnesses. "The young woman whom at my last visit, I left in utter despair, this morning broke out into the following expressions; 'I see, I see it now, that Jesus Christ died for me; and for all the world.' Some of her words to me were 'death stares me in the face, but I fear him not, he cannot hurt me:' and again, 'death may shake his dart in vain; God is love, pure love, love to every man!' The next I saw, was our brother S—,

'With joyful eyes, and looks divine,
Smiling and pleased in death.'"

April 13th. "I gave the sacrament to the bands of Kingswood, not of Bristol: in obedience, as I told them, to the Church of England, which requires a weekly sacrament at every cathedral. But as they had it not there, and as on this particular Sunday, they were refused it, at Temple church, (I myself, with many of them, having been repelled,) I therefore administered it to them in our school; and had we wanted a house, would justify doing it in the midst of the wood. I strongly urged the duty of receiving it, as often as they could be admitted to the churches. Such a sacrament, I never was present at before. We received the sure pledges of our Saviour's dying love; and were most of us, filled with all joy and peace in believing." This it seems, was the beginning of the practice of administering the sacrament at Kingswood.

April 20th. "Returning from Baptist Mills, I heard that our sister Richardson had finished her course. My soul was filled with strong consolation, and struggled, as it were, to go out after her, 'as heavenward endeavoring.' Jesus, my time is in thy hand: only let me follow her, as she has followed thee! The voice of joy and thanksgiving was in the congregation, while I spake of her death. April 22d, I hastened to the joyful funeral. The new room was crowded within and without. I spake largely of her whose faith they might safely follow. Great was my glorying and rejoicing over her. She being dead, yet spake in words of faith and love, which ought to be had in remembrance. We were in a measure, partakers of her joy, a joy unspeakable and full of glory. The whole society followed her to the grave, through all the city. Satan raged exceedingly in his children, who threw dirt and stones at us. After the burial we joined in the following hymn,

'Come let us, who in Christ believe,
With saints and angels join,' &c."

May 1st, "I visited a sister dying in the Lord. Then two others, one mourning after, the other rejoicing in, God her Saviour. I was now informed that another of our sisters, E. Smith, is gone home in triumph. She witnessed a good confession of the universal Saviour, and gave up her spirit with these words, 'I go to my heavenly Father,' &c. May 4th, I rejoiced over our sister Hooper. The outward man decayeth, but the inner man is renewed. For one whole night she had wrestled with all the powers of darkness: but having done all, she stood unshaken. From henceforth she was kept in perfect peace, and that wicked one touched her not. I saw her again in great bodily weakness, but strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. I spoke with her physician, who said he had little hope of her recovery; 'only,' added he, 'she has no dread upon her spirits, which is generally the worst symptom. Most people die for fear of dying; but I never met with such people as yours. They are none of them afraid of death; but calm and patient, and resigned to the last.' He had said to her, 'Madam, be not cast down.' She answered smiling, 'Sir, I shall never be cast down.' "

May 6th, "Found our sister Hooper just at the haven. She expressed, while able to speak, her fulness of confidence and love: and her desire to be with Christ. At my next visit, I saw her in the last conflict. The angel of death was come, and there were but a few moments between her and a blessed eternity. We poured out our souls to God, for her, her children, ourselves, the church and ministers, and for all mankind. My soul was tenderly affected for her sufferings, but the joy swallowed up the sorrow. How much then did her consolations abound! The servants of Christ, comparatively speaking, suffer nothing. I asked her, whether she was not in great pain? Yes, she answered, but in greater joy. I would not be without either." "But do you not prefer life or death?" She replied "all is alike to me; let Christ choose, I have no will of my own. Her spirit ascended to God, and we kneeled down and gave God thanks from the ground of our heart. Then we had recourse to the book of comfort, and found it written, 'Let us therefore labor to enter into that rest;' even so, come Lord Jesus, and give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified."

May 8th, "We solemnized the funeral * of our sister Hooper, and rejoiced over her with singing. A great multitude attended her to the grave. There we sang another hymn of triumph. I found myself pressed in spirit to speak to those who contradicted and blasphemed. While I reasoned on death and judgment to come, many trembled; one woman cried out in horrible agony. We returned to the room,

* This was a very early interment; but I suppose the state of the body made it necessary.

and continued our solemn rejoicings, all desiring to be dissolved and to be with Christ."

May 14th. He now visited Mrs. Lellington, drawing near the end of her journey through life. She had received peace and joy in believing, and all fear of hell, death and sin, were fled away. He adds, "I saw two more of our sick sisters; then two of the brethren in Kingswood, who were all rejoicing in hope of a speedy dissolution. Preached at Kendalshire, and visited one of the bands there, who walked through the valley of the shadow of death, and feared no evil. I prayed by a seventh in Bristol, who triumphed over the King of terrors. If God be not with us, who hath begotten us these?"

May 20th, "I was called to a dying woman, who confessed she had often railed at me in her health, but was now constrained to send for me, and ask my pardon, or she could not die in peace. We prayed our Lord to speak peace and pardon to her soul. Several such instances we have had of scoffers, when their feet stumble on the dark mountains. May 22d, I preached a funeral sermon for our sister Lellington, and attended the corpse to the grave, where we rejoiced in hope of quickly following her. I gave an exhortation to repentance, though satan greatly withstood me: thereby teaching me, never to let go unwarned, the poor sinners that come on such occasions. Passed the night with my brother at Kingswood, in watching unto prayer. I wish this primitive custom were revived among all our brethren. The word of God encourages us, to be in watchings often. By two o'clock I returned to Bristol, and at five found strength to expound in the new room." May 30th, he observes, "I passed an hour with a spiritual Quaker, and rejoiced to find, we were both of the same religion."—I apprehend that all men, who have true christian experience, are of the *same religion;* however they may differ in opinion or modes of worship. They are the one fold, under the one true Shepherd. If all true Christians would consider this point as they ought, there would soon be an end of disputation among them, and brotherly love would take place.

May 31st, "Throughout this day, I found my strength increase with my labor. I read in the society, my account of Hannah Richardson.* She being dead, yet spake so powerfully to our hearts, that my voice was lost in the sorrowful sighing of such as be in captivity. To several, God showed himself the God of consolation; particularly to two young Welchmen, whom his providence sent hither from Caermarthen. They had heard most dreadful stories of us, Arminians, Freewillers, Perfectionists, Papists, which all vanished like smoke, when they came to hear with their own ears. God applied to their hearts the word of his power. I took them to my lodgings, and stocked them with books; then sent them away, recommended to the grace of God, which bringeth salvation to all men."

* This account was printed. See Mr. John Wesley's Works, vol. xiii. p. 213.

June 16th, "I preached in Kingswood, on the dreadful words, 'SELL ALL.' How has the devil baffled those teachers, who for fear of setting men upon works, forbear urging this first universal duty! If enforcing Christ's words be to preach works, I hope I shall preach works as long as I live." It is certain however, that Mr. Wesley did not understand our Lord's words literally, but as teaching us to put away every thing we know to be sinful, how advantageous soever it may be to our temporal interest, or agreeable to our inclination; and that we should omit no opportunity of doing all the good in our power.

July 11th, Mr. Wesley preached five times this day: at Bristol, twice at Kingswood, at a place called Sawford, and at Bath. He observes, "Satan took it ill to be attacked in his head quarters, that Sodom of our land, Bath. He raged horribly in his children. They went out, and came back again, and mocked, and at last roared, as if each man's name had been Legion. The sincere were melted into tears, and strong desires of salvation." It is pleasing to reflect on the change which has taken place in Bath, since the time of which Mr. Wesley is here speaking. God has raised up many faithful witnesses of his truth, both among the Methodists, and among Lady Huntingdon's people, who have been ornaments to the christian profession: and at present the gospel is preached there, without molestation.

July 13th, he set out for Cardiff, and on the 15th, rode on with Mr. Wells, Mr. Hodges, and others to Fonmon Castle. Mr. Wesley adds, "Mr. Jones, who had sent for me, received me very courteously. He civilly apologized for the first question, which he asked me as a magistrate: 'Whether I was a Papist? or whether I was a member of the Established Church of England?" He was fully satisfied with my answers; and I found we were cotemporaries at the same college. After dinner he sent to Porthkerry, where, at his desire, Mr. Richards the minister lent me his pulpit. I preached, on, 'God so loved the world,' &c. Never hath he given me more convincing words. The flock and their shepherd were deeply affected. After sermon, Mr. Richards begged my pardon for having believed the strange reports circulated concerning me. God had now spoken the contrary to his heart, and to the hearts of his people. I yielded to Mr. Jones's importunity, and agreed to delay my return to Bristol, that I might preach here once more, and spend a night at the castle."

July 17th, he met Mr. and Mrs. Jones at Mr. Richards's, where he again preached, and in the evening went to the castle. Mr. Wesley adds, "We ate our bread with gladness and singleness of heart, and at seven o'clock I preached to some hundreds in the court-yard. My three brethren, the Rev. Messrs. Richards, Wells, and Hodges, stood in the midst of the people, and kneeled on the ground in prayer, and cried after the Son of David. He breathed into our souls strong desires. O! that he may confirm, increase, and satisfy them. The

voice of thanksgiving was heard in this place. Before and after supper, we sang, and blessed God with joyful lips. They in the parlor and kitchen, were continually honoring him, by offering up praise. I thought it looked like the house of faithful Abraham. The next day, July 18th, I took sweet counsel with Mr. Jones alone. The seed is sown in his heart, and will bring forth fruit unto perfection. His wife joined us, and I commended them to the grace of God in earnest prayer, and then went on my way rejoicing."

Mr. Wesley now returned to Bristol: and on August the 3d, he preached the funeral sermon of Mrs. Peacock, who died in the Lord most triumphantly. He observes, "She was always praising God for giving her such patience. All her desires were unto the Lord, and she continued calling upon him, in all the confidence of love, till he received her into his more immediate presence. At the sight of her coffin, my soul was moved within me, and struggled as a bird to break its cage. Some relief I found in tears; but still was so overpowered, that, unless God had abated the vehemence of my desires, I could have had no utterance. The whole congregation partook with me, in the blessedness of mourning. August 6th, coming to pray by a poor Welch woman, she began with me, 'Blessed be God that ever I heard you! Jesus, my Jesus, has heard me on a bed of sickness. He is in my heart; he is my strength; none shall pluck me out of his hands. I cannot leave him, and he will not leave me. O! do not let me ask for death, if thou wouldst have me live. I know thou canst keep me. If thou wouldst have me live, let me live humbly with thee all my days.' I sat and heard her sing the new song, till even my hard heart was melted. She glorified the Saviour of the world, who would have all men to be saved. 'I know it,' said she; 'he would not have one sinner lost. Believe, and he will give you all that, which he has given me.'" Surely the doctrine which these men preached, was the true gospel of God our Saviour. It not only improves the understanding, but it gives strength and firmness of mind to the most weak and ignorant, enabling them to triumph over the severest afflictions to which human life is subject. Here is a poor illiterate Welch woman, who not only rises superior to sickness and death, but talks in a rational scriptural manner, of the deep things of God! Show me any system of philosophy, any mere speculative notions of divinity, any other way of preaching the gospel, which produces the same effects on the human mind in the same circumstances: then I may doubt whether this be the true gospel.

On the 24th of this month Mr. Wesley, in company with F. Farley, paid another visit to his friends in Wales, and again in September, staying only a few days each time. Mr. Jones, of Fonmon castle, accompanied him in his return from the last visit; being desirous to see the wonderful effects of the gospel among the wild ignorant colliers of Kingswood. Thither Mr. Wesley took him on the 20th of

September, and says, "It was a glorious time at the society, where God called forth his witnesses. Our guest was filled with consolation, and acknowledged that God was with us of a truth. I met the bands, and strongly urged them to press towards the mark. Read them a letter full of threatenings to take our house by violence. We laughed our enemies to scorn: faith saw the mountain full of horsemen and chariots of fire. Our brother from Wales was compelled to bear his testimony, and declare before all what God had done for his soul. He warned us to prepare for the storm which would surely fall upon us, if the work went on. His artless words were greatly blessed to us all; and our hearts were bowed and warmed by the spirit of love, as the heart of one man."

September 22. "Mr. Jones wished to take me to some of his great friends in the city; particularly to a counsellor, about the threatened seizure of our school. I feared nothing but trusting to an arm of flesh: our safety is, to be still. However, at his importunity I went with him a little way, then turned back, and at last agreed to go with him to Justice C——r, the most forward of our adversaries. He received us courteously. I said, I came to wait upon him in respect to his office, having heard his name mentioned among some, who were offended at the good we did to the poor colliers: that I should be sorry to give any just cause of complaint, and was willing to know if any had been made: that many idle reports were spread, as if he should countenance the violence of those who had seized the house of Mr. C—— and now threatened to take away the colliers' school. He said 'it would make a good workhouse.' I caught hold of the expression, and replied it is a workhouse already. 'Ay,' said he, 'but what work is done there?' I answered, 'we work the works of God, which man cannot hinder.' 'But you occasion the increase of the poor.' 'Sir, you are misinformed; the reverse of that is true. None of our society are chargeable to you; even those who were so, before they heard us, are not so now; the men who spent all their wages at the alehouse, now never go there at all, but keep their money to maintain their families, and have to give to those who want. Notorious swearers, have now only the praises of God in their mouths. The good done among them is indisputable; our worst enemies cannot deny it. No one who hears us, continues either to swear or drink.' 'If I thought so,' he hastily replied, (*in eodem luto hæsitans*) 'I would come and hear you myself.' I desired he would; and said, the grace of God was as sufficient for him as for our colliers, and who knew but he might be converted among us?

"I gave him to understand, that Mr. Jones was in the commission of the peace, who then asked him on what pretence they had seized Mr. C——'s house? He utterly denied having had any hand in it, and said he should not at all concern himself. 'For if what you do, you do for gain, you have your reward: if for the sake of God, he will

recompense you. I am of Gamaliel's mind, if this counsel or work be of men, it will come to nought, but if it be of God—' I proceeded, 'ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found to fight against God. Follow therefore Gamaliel's advice; take heed to yourselves, refrain from these men, and let them alone.' He seemed determined so to do, and thus, through the blessing of God, we parted friends.

"In our way home I admired the hand which directs all our paths. In the evening at Bristol, we found under the word, that there is none like unto the God of Jeshurun. It was a time of sweet refreshment. Just when I had done, my brother came in from London, as if sent on purpose to be comforted together with us.* He exhorted and prayed with the congregation for another half hour. Then we went to our friend Vigers, and for an hour or two longer our souls were satisfied as with marrow and fatness, while our mouth praised God with joyful lips."

I find no account of Mr. Wesley's labors for the year 1742. In the beginning of February, 1743, he was employed with his brother Mr. John Wesley in visiting the classes in London,† and makes an observation, which deserves the most serious consideration both of preachers and people. "One among the classes," says he, "told my brother, that she had a constant sense of forgiveness; and he let her pass. I could not help proving her further; and then the justified sinner appeared full of the gall of bitterness. She said again and again, of a sister present, I do not love her, I hate her, &c. I assured her that if an angel from heaven told me *she* was justified, I would not believe him, for she was a murderer. As such we prayed for her, and she was convinced of unbelief. I fear we have *many such believers* among us." Mr. Wesley was no friend to an over hasty admission of members into the society, which he thought hurtful. He clearly saw two errors into which the Methodist preachers are continually in danger of falling. Every assistant is desirous of making the *numbers* in the different societies over which he has presided, appear as high as possible, at the yearly conference. This becomes a strong temptation to take improper persons into the society, whose life and conversation do no credit to religion. Every preacher in the Methodist connexion, is desirous of making as many friends to himself as possible among the people; and this becomes a temptation to omit reproof where it is necessary, to flatter the professions of some, who deserve no credit, and to speak of others as being in a state of grace, to which they have no claim. I sincerely wish that every preacher may carefully avoid these dreadful precipices, where he is in constant danger of destroying both himself and others.

In the latter end of February, Mr. Wesley went down to Bath and Bristol: and here, and in the neighboring places, perhaps also in

* This exactly accords with Mr. John Wesley's printed Journal. See his Works, vol. xxxviii. p. 5.

† See again, vol. xxxviii. p. 133.

Wales (for his Journal does not mention particulars) he continued his labors till the 17th of May, when he set out for the North. He preached at Painswick, admitted twelve new members into the society, and then visited Stroud, Evesham, and several other places; and on the 20th, he observes, "I got once more to our dear colliers at Wednesbury. Here the seed has taken root, and many are added to the church. A society of more than three hundred, are seeking full redemption in the cleansing blood of Christ. The enemy rages exceedingly, and preaches against them. A few here have returned railing for railing; but the generality have behaved as the followers of Christ Jesus. May 21, I spent the morning in conference with several who have received the atonement under my brother's ministry. I saw the piece of ground to build a chapel upon, given us by a Dissenter. I walked with many of our brethren to Walsal, singing as we went. We were received with the old complaint, 'Behold these that turn the world upside down, are come hither also.' We walked through the town, amidst the noisy greetings of our enemies. I stood on the steps of the market-house. An host of men came against us; and they lifted up their voice and raged horribly. I preached from these words, 'But none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy,' &c. The street was full of fierce Ephesian beasts, (the principal man setting them on) who roared and shouted, and threw stones incessantly. At the conclusion a stream of ruffians was suffered to beat me down from the steps; I rose, and having given the blessing, was beat down again, and so a third time. When we had returned thanks to the God of our salvation, I then from the steps bid them depart in peace, and walked through the thickest of the rioters. They reviled us, but had no commission to touch a hair of our head. May 22, I preached to between one and two thousand peaceable people, at Birmingham, and again at Wednesbury in the evening. On the 23d, I took my leave in those words, 'Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith; and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of heaven.' With many tears, and blessings, they sent me away, recommended to the grace of God."

May 24, Mr. Wesley reached Nottingham, having preached at two or three places in his way thither from Wednesbury. At two o'clock, he went to the Market-cross, and proclaimed the Saviour of all men; and in the evening expounded, at their request, to Mr. Howe's society. The next day he was at the cross again; he observes, "There was not a breath of opposition, but a storm must follow this calm. Several persons joined me at the inn, in prayer and thanksgiving. One gave me a kind caution, for which I sincerely thanked him. 'Mr. Rogers did run well, and preached the truth, as you do here; but what a sad end has he made of it! Take care you do not leave the

church like him.' In the afternoon I came to the flock in Sheffield, who are as sheep among wolves; the minister having so stirred up the people, that they are ready to tear the Methodists in pieces. At six o'clock, I went to the society house, next door to our brother Bennet's. Hell from beneath was moved to oppose us. As soon as I was in the desk, with David Taylor, the floods began to lift up their voice. An officer in the army, contradicted and blasphemed. I took no notice of him, but sang on. The stones flew thick, striking the desk and the people. To save them, and the house from being pulled down, I gave out, that I should preach in the street, and look them in the face. The whole army of the alien Chaldeans followed me. The captain laid hold on me, and began rioting: I gave him for answer, 'A word in season, or advice to a soldier.' I then prayed, particularly for his Majesty King George, and preached the gospel with much contention. The stones often struck me in the face. I prayed for sinners, as servants of their master, the devil; upon which the captain ran at me with great fury, threatening revenge for abusing, as he called it, 'The king his master.' He forced his way through the brethren, drew his sword, and presented it to my breast. I immediately opened my breast, and fixing my eye on his, and smiling in his face, calmly said, 'I fear God and honor the king.' His countenance fell in a moment, he fetched a deep sigh, and putting up his sword, quietly left the place. He had said to one of the company who afterwards informed me, 'You shall see if I do but hold my sword to his breast, he will faint away.' So perhaps I should, had I only his principles to trust to; but if at that time I was not afraid, no thanks to my natural courage. We returned to our brother Bennet's, and gave ourselves up to prayer. The rioters followed, and exceeded in outrage, all I have seen before. Those at Moorfields, Cardiff, and Walsal, were lambs to these. As there is no king in Israel, I mean no magistrate in Sheffield, every man 'doeth as seemeth good in his own eyes.'" The mob now formed the design of pulling down the society house, and set upon their work, while Mr. Wesley and the people were praying and praising God within. "It was a glorious time," says he, "with us: every word of exhortation sunk deep, every prayer was sealed, and many found the spirit of glory resting upon them." The next day the house was completely pulled down, not one stone being left upon another: "Nevertheless," said Mr. Wesley to a friend, "the foundation standeth sure, and our house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." This day he preached again in the street, somewhat more quietly than before. In the evening the rioters became very noisy again, and threatened to pull down the house, where Mr. Wesley lodged. He went out to them; read the riot-act, and made a suitable exhortation, and they soon afterwards separated, and peace was restored.

May 27. At five in the morning, he took leave of the society in

these words, "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." He observes, "Our hearts were knit together, and greatly comforted: we rejoiced in hope of the glorious appearing of the great God, who had now delivered us out of the mouth of the lions. David Taylor informed me, that the people of Thorpe, through which we should pass, were exceedingly mad against us. So we found them as we approached the place, and were turning down the lane to Barley Hall. The ambush rose, and assaulted us with stones, eggs and dirt. My horse flew from side to side, till he found his way through them. They wounded D. Taylor in the forehead, and the wound bled much. I turned back, and asked, what was the reason a clergyman could not pass without such treatment? At first the rioters scattered, but their captain rallying them, answered with horrible imprecations and stones. My horse took fright, and turned away with me down a steep hill. The enemy pursued me from afar, and followed shouting. Blessed be God, I received no hurt, only from the eggs and dirt. My clothes indeed abhorred me, and my arm pained me a little from a blow I received at Sheffield." This conduct is undoubtedly disgraceful to humanity: I hope the present inhabitants of these towns will endeavor to retrieve their character, by a peaceable and obliging behavior on all occasions. Mr. Wesley now spent an hour or two, with some quiet sincere persons, assembled at Barley Hall. By four o'clock in the afternoon he reached Birstal, a land of rest. Here they had peace in all their borders. Great multitudes were bowed down, by the victorious power of gospel truth. "It was," says Mr. Wesley, "a time much to be remembered, for the gracious rain, wherewith our God refreshed us." The next day he preached again in the morning and at noon, to this child-like people, and again in the afternoon at Ormsby, in his way to Leeds. May 29, he informs us in his Journal, that, not a year before he had come to Leeds, and found no man who cared for the things of God: "But," he observes, "a spark has now fallen in this place also, and it will kindle a great flame. I met the infant society, about fifty in number, most of them justified, and exhorted them to walk circumspectly. At seven o'clock, I stood before Mr. Shent's door, and cried to thousands, 'Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.' The word took place. They gave diligent heed to it, and seemed a people prepared for the Lord. I went to the great church, and was showed to the ministers' pew. Five clergymen were there, who a little confounded me, by making me take place of my elders and betters. They obliged me to help in administering the sacrament. I assisted with eight more ministers, for whom my soul was much drawn out in prayer. But I dreaded their favor, more than the stones at Sheffield." What Mr. Wesley here speaks respecting the clergymen present, must not be understood as implying

either disrespect or reproach. If he had any fault in his judgment of the clergy, it was that he thought too highly of the clerical office. The fear which he here speaks of, concerned himself only. He was fully convinced, that the manner in which he now preached the gospel, was not contrary to any written law of God or man: from the circumstance of being excluded from the churches, from the satisfaction he experienced in himself, in carrying the gospel to those who would not come to it, and from the effect of his labors on multitudes of the people, he was fully satisfied that his present plan of proceeding was agreeable to the will of God. But he found, that the favors and friendly attentions of those who disapproved of it, tended to weaken his resolution to persevere in it. Kindness has a wonderfully assimilating influence on the human mind: it melts down opposition in a generous heart; and while a man feels nothing but the most agreeable sensations from it, he is insensibly changed into a conformity with those who show him favor. Many have been turned from their duty, by kindness and favor, who could not be moved by persecution. Mr. Wesley felt the force of this assimilating principle, and hence he says, that he "dreaded their favor more than the stones at Sheffield."

At two o'clock, he found a vast multitude waiting for the word, and strongly exhorted them to repent and believe the gospel, that their sins might be blotted out. He preached again at Bristol, calling upon the poor and maimed, the halt and blind to come to the great supper. He observes, "My Lord disposed many hearts, I doubt not, to accept the invitation. He showed me several witnesses of the truth, which they have now received in the love of it. I had a blessed parting with the society. May 30, my horse threw me, and fell upon me. My companion thought I had broken my neck; but my leg only was bruised, my hand sprained, and my head stunned, which spoiled me from making hymns, or thinking at all till the next day, when the Lord brought us safe to Newcastle. At seven o'clock I went to the room, which will contain about two thousand persons. We rejoiced for the consolation of our mutual faith."

Many persons at Newcastle, had been greatly agitated during the preaching, falling into convulsive motions with strong cries. At their first preaching of the gospel, many, as he justly observes, were undoubtedly struck down into the deepest distress, which affected both soul and body. Mr. Wesley believed, that such instances might still continue to occur. But he soon perceived, that these natural affections, and the outward expressions of them, were easily imitated; and the persons at first so affected, being much noticed and talked of, this became a temptation to others to imitate their state. He says, "I have already detected many counterfeits." I recollect two instances, mentioned in his Journal before this period. A woman at Kingswood was greatly agitated under his preaching, and cried much: he turned to her and said, "I do not think any better of you, for

crying," &c. and she presently became quite calm. A young girl at Bristol fell into fits, and seemed like one in a trance. She continued this practice for some time; but at length acknowledged she had done it, that Mr. Wesley might take notice of her. No man ever had a more tender sympathy with those in distress, than Mr. Charles Wesley; but no man abhorred hypocrisy, or a mere assumed appearance of religious concern more than he did. Yet he did not judge persons who appeared to be so affected, till he had the proper evidences on which he could form a true judgment; but he thought it prudent to give them no encouragement, until some evidence of their sincerity appeared. June 4, "To-day," says he, "one came who was pleased to fall into a fit for my entertainment. He beat himself heartily: I thought it a pity to hinder him; so, instead of singing over him, as had often been done, we left him to recover at his leisure. A girl, as she began her cry, I ordered to be carried out. Her convulsions were so violent, as to take away the use of her limbs, till they laid her without at the door, and left her; then she immediately found her legs and walked off. Some very unstill sisters, who always took care to stand near me, and tried who should cry loudest, since I have had them removed out of my sight, have been as quiet as lambs. The first night I preached here, half my words were lost, through the noise of their outcries. Last night before I began, I gave public notice, that whosoever cried, so as to drown my voice, should without any man's hurting or judging them, be gently carried to the furthest corner of the room. But my porters had no employment the whole night! Yet the Lord was with us, mightily convincing of sin and of righteousness."

June 5. "My soul was revived by the poor people at Chowden; and yet more at Tanfield, where I called to great numbers, 'Behold the Lamb of God,' &c. At Newcastle I preached in the crowded square, chiefly to the backsliders, whom I besought with tears to be reconciled to God. Surely Jesus looked upon some of them as he looked upon Peter. June 6, I had the great comfort of recovering some of those who have drawn back. I trust we shall recover them again forever. On the 8th, I spake to the bands separately, and tried their faith. We certainly have been too rash and easy in allowing persons for believers on their own testimony: nay, and even persuading them into a false opinion of themselves. Some souls it is doubtless necessary to encourage; but it should be done with prudence and caution. To tell one in darkness that he has faith, is to keep him in darkness still, or to make him trust in a false light; a faith that stands in the words of man, not in the power of God. June 13, I wrote thus to a son in the gospel, 'Be not over sure that so many are justified. By their fruits ye shall know them. You will see reason to be more and more deliberate in the judgment you pass on persons. Wait for their conversation. I do not know whether we can infalli-

bly pronounce at the time, that any one is justified. I once thought several in that state, who, I am now convinced, were under the drawings of the Father. Try the spirits therefore, lest you should lay the stumbling-block of pride in their way, and by supposing them to have faith before they have it, you keep them out of it forever.' "

We may perceive by these observations, that Mr. Wesley was a diligent attentive watchman over the people. He carefully explored the unfrequented road through which he had to guide them, and honestly pointed out the flattering by-paths which led to misery and danger. But experience hath repeatedly shown, that they who most want these salutary cautions, are the least disposed to receive them. Few persons have sincerity enough to be thankful for advice which tends to undeceive them; to strip them of some imaginary comforts, and make them think worse of themselves than they did before. Professors of religion are commonly the most impatient of such advice. It is certain, that these cautions require great prudence and discernment, in applying them to particular persons; but in a large body of people, and among a great number of preachers, there is much more danger of flattering individuals into a false confidence, under a pretence of giving them encouragement, than of hindering their progress by putting them upon a close and severe self-examination. In the one case we tread a slippery path, in the other we stand on firm ground. At this early period of the present revival of religion, Mr. Wesley saw the necessity of making these remarks. He repeated them frequently afterwards, and has been censured for so doing. I wish the necessity of urging such advice on the preachers and people, may not greatly increase, while the practice of doing it is daily diminished.

Mr. Wesley observes, that since he had preached the gospel it never had greater success than at this time at Newcastle. "Yet," says he, "we have no fits among us, and I have done nothing to hinder them, only declared that I do not think the better of any one for crying out. June 16, I set out for Sunderland, with strong aversion to preaching. I dragged myself to about a thousand wild people, and cried, 'O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help.' Never have I seen greater attention in any people at their first hearing the word. We rode to Shields, went to church, and the people flocked in crowds after me. The minister spake so low that he could not be heard in reading prayers; but I heard him loud enough afterwards, calling to the church wardens to quiet the disturbance, which none but himself had raised. I fancy he thought I should preach in the church where I stood, like some of the first Quakers. The clerk came to me bawling out, 'It was consecrated ground, and I had no business to preach on it. That I was no minister,' &c.—When he had cried himself out of breath, I whispered in his ear that I had no intention to preach there. He stumbled on a good saying,

'If you have any word of exhortation to the people, speak to them without.' I did so, to an huge multitude waiting in the church-yard: many of them very fierce, threatening to drown me, and what not! I walked through the midst of them, and discoursed in strong awakening words on the jailor's question, 'What must I do to be saved.' The church wardens and others labored in vain to interrupt me by throwing dirt, and even money among the people. Having delivered my message, I rode to the ferry, crossed it, and met as rough friends on the other side. The mob of North Shields waited to salute me, with the minister at their head. He had got a man with a horn instead of a trumpet, and bid him blow, and his companions shout. Others were almost as violent in their approbation. We went through honor and dishonor; but neither of them hurt us, and by six o'clock with God's blessing we came safe to Newcastle."

June 19. Mr. Wesley took leave of the Society at Newcastle, who parted from him with tears and many prayers. Wherever he came, he preached or exhorted as opportunity offered, and on the 22d, reached Epworth, his native place. "All who met me," says he, "saluted me with hearty joy. At eight in the evening I preached in Edward Smith's yard. July 23, waking, I found the Lord with me, even my strong helper, the God of whom cometh salvation. I preached and guarded some new converts against spiritual pride." The next day, June 24, he arrived at Nottingham; and adds, "I found my brother in the market-place,* calling lost sinners to him who justifieth the ungodly. He gave notice of my preaching in the evening. At seven, many thousands attended in deep silence. Surely the Lord hath much people in this place. We began a society of nine members. June 25, I came to Birmingham, and the next day, being Sunday, several of our persecuted brethren from Wednesbury, came to me, whom I endeavored to comfort. I preached at eight and at one o'clock, no man forbidding me. I expounded in the evening to several thousands. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I began our society. The number at present is thirteen."

June 27. He set out for London, where he arrived on the evening of the 28th, having visited Oxford in his way thither. July 3, he says, "Mr. Hall, poor moravianized Mr. Hall, met me at the chapel. I did him honor before the people. I expounded the gospel, as usual, and strongly avowed my intolerable attachment to the Church of England. Mr. Meriton and Graves assisted at the sacrament. July 6, I showed from Romans the 5th, the marks of justification, and overturned the vain confidence of several. I strongly warned them against seducers, and found my heart knit to this people. July 8, I. Bray came to persuade me not to preach till the bishops should bid me. They have not yet forbid me; but by the grace of God I shall

* See also Mr. John Wesley's Works, vol. xxviii. page 151.

preach the word, in season and out of season, though they and all men forbid me." July 11, he left London, and the day following arrived in Bristol. He stayed there only one night, and then set out for Cornwall, and on the 16th, came safe to St. Ives. July 17, he says, "I rose and forgot that I had travelled from Newcastle. I spake with some of this loving simple people, who are as sheep in the midst of wolves. The priests stir up the people, and make their minds evil affected towards their brethren. Yet the sons of violence are much checked by the mayor, an honest Presbyterian, whom the Lord hath raised up."

Mr. Wesley continued preaching the gospel at St. Ives and the places adjacent, till the beginning of August. During this time, he and the people passed through many difficulties and dangers, the rioters being numerous, and almost as desperate as those at Sheffield. The mayor informed Mr. Wesley that the ministers were the principal authors of all the mischief. In their sermons they continually represented Mr. Wesley and the preachers, as Popish emissaries, and urged the enraged multitude to take all manner of means to stop them. While he was preaching at St. Ives on the 26th, he observes, "All was quiet, the mayor having declared his resolution to swear twenty more constables, and suppress the rioters by force of arms. Their drum he had seized. All the time I was preaching he stood at a little distance to awe the rioters. He has set the whole town against him, by not giving us up to their fury. But he plainly told Mr. Hoblin, that fire and fagot minister, that he would not be perjured to gratify any man's malice. He informed us that he had often heard Mr. Hoblin say, they ought to drive us away by blows, not by arguments."

During the riots he one day observes, "I went to church and heard that terrible chapter, Jeremiah the 7th, enough, one would think, to make even this hardened people tremble. Never were words more applicable than those, 'Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, are these.—Behold ye trust in lying words that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely—and come and stand before me in this house?' &c."

His brother having summoned him to London, to confer with the heads of the Moravians and Calvinists, he set out on the 8th of August. "We had," says he, "near three hundred miles to travel in five days. I was willing to undertake the labor for the sake of peace, though the journey was too great for us and our beasts, which we had

used almost every day for three months. August 12, hardly reached the Foundery by nine at night. Here I heard that the Moravians would not be present at the conference. Spangenberg indeed said he would, but immediately left England. My brother was come from Newcastle; I. Nelson from Yorkshire; and I from the Land's End, for good purpose!"

October 17. He set out to meet his brother at Nottingham, who had escaped with his life, almost by miracle, out of the hands of the mob at Wednesbury. On the 21st, Mr. Charles Wesley observes, "My brother came, delivered out of the mouth of the lions! His clothes were torn to tatters—he looked like a soldier of Christ. The mob of Wednesbury, Darlaston, and Walsal, were permitted to take and carry him about for several hours, with a full intent to murder him; but his work is not yet finished, or he had been now with the souls under the altar. October 24, I had a blessed parting from the society, and by night came wet and weary to Birmingham. On the 25th, was much encouraged by the patience of our brethren from Wednesbury. They pressed me to come and preach to them in the midst of the town. It was agreed between my brother and me, that if they asked me I should go. Accordingly we set out in the dark, and came to Francis Ward's, from whence my brother had been carried last Thursday night.* I found the brethren assembled, standing fast in one mind and spirit, in nothing terrified by their adversaries. The word given me for them, was, 'Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men, be strong.' Jesus was with us in the midst, and covered us with a covering of his spirit. Never was I before, in so primitive an assembly. We sang praises with courage, and could all set our seal to the truth of our Lord's saying, 'Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake. We laid us down and slept, and rose up again, for the Lord sustained us. As soon as it was light, I walked down the town and preached boldly. It was a most glorious time: our souls were satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and we longed for our Lord's coming to confess us before his Father, and before his holy angels. We now understood what it was to receive the word in much affliction, and yet with joy in the Holy Ghost."

"I took several new members into the society; and among them, the young man whose arm had been broke, and Munchin upon trial, the late captain of the mob. He has been constantly under the word, since he rescued my brother. I asked him what he thought of him? 'Think of him,' said he, 'that he is a man of God, and God was on his side, when so *many of us* could not kill *one man*.' We rode through the town unmolested on our way to Birmingham, where I preached. I rode on to Evesham, and found John Nelson preaching, and confirmed his word. October 27, preached at five in the morn-

* See Mr. John Wesley's Works, vol. xxviii. page 175.

ing, then read prayers and preached twice at Quinton, and the fourth time at Evesham, with great liberty."

October 29th, he came once more to Bristol, where, he observes, that he had only spent one day for six months. On the 31st he set out for Wales, and reached Cardiff on the first of November. "The gentlemen," says he, "had threatened great things if I ever came there again. I called in the midst of them, 'Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by,' &c. The love of God constrained me to speak and them to hear. The word was irresistible. After it one of the most violent opposers took me by the hand, and pressed me to come and see him. The rest were equally civil all the time I staid; only one drunkard made some disturbance, and when sober sent to ask my pardon. The voice of praise and thanksgiving was in the society. Many are grown in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I passed an hour with the wife and daughter of the chief bailiff, who are waiting as little children for the kingdom of God."

Nov. 6. Mr. Wesley returned to Bristol. On the 16th he preached at Bath, in his way to Cirencester, and the Lord gave testimony to his word. He travelled on, and preached at Evesham, Gutherton, Quinton, and Oxford; and on the 23d, at the Foundery. He staid in London, laboring in public and private, for the good of the people, till January 30, 1744, when he again set out for the North, recommended to the grace of God by all the brethren. On the first of February, he came to Birmingham. He observes, "A great door is opened in the country, but there are many adversaries." The preacher at Dudley had been cruelly abused by a mob of Papists and Dissenters; the Dissenters being stirred by Mr. Whiting their minister. "It is probable," says Mr. Wesley, "that he would have been murdered, but for an honest Quaker, who favored his escape by disguising him in his broad hat and drab colored coat. Staffordshire, at present seems the seat of war." Mr. Wesley here uses the word Dissenters in the common acceptation, as denoting either Presbyterians, Independents, or Baptists; but which of these denominations is here intended I do not know. No men have cried out with more vehemence against persecution, when under the rod, than the Dissenters; and yet we find that their principles and practices have sometimes been at variance. I am inclined to think, that the Friends, or Quakers, as they are commonly called, are the only denomination of Christians in England, of any long standing, who have never been guilty of persecution, in some form or other. Candor must acknowledge that this is greatly to their praise.

February 2. "I set out with brother Webb, for Wednesbury, the field of battle. We met with variety of greetings on the road. I cried in the street, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.' Several of our persecutors stood at a distance, but

none offered to make the least disturbance. I walked through the blessings and curses of the people (but the blessings exceeded) to visit Mr. Egerton's widow. Never have I observed such bitterness as in these opposers. February 3, I preached, and prayed with the society, and beat down the fiery self-avenging spirit of resistance, which was rising in some to disgrace, if not to destroy the word of God." Mr. Wesley preached within sight of Dudley, and then waited on the friendly Captain Dudley, who had stood in the gap, and kept off persecution at Tippen-green, while it raged all around. He then returned in peace through the enemy's country.

The rioters now gave notice that they would come on the Tuesday following, and pull down the houses and destroy the goods of the Methodists. "One would think," says Mr. Wesley, "there was no king in Israel. There is certainly no magistrate, who will put them to shame in any thing. Mr. Constable offered to make oath that their lives were in danger, but the justice refused it, saying that he could do nothing. Other of our complaining brethren met with the same redress, being driven away with revilings. The magistrates do not themselves tear off their clothes and beat them, they only stand by and see others do it. One of them told Mr. Jones, it was the best thing the mob ever did, so to treat the Methodists; and he himself would give five pounds to drive them out of the country. Another, when our brother Ward begged his protection, delivered him up to the mercy of the mob, who had half murdered him before, and throwing his hat round his head cried, 'huzza boys, well done, stand up for the church.'" Such magistrates, sworn to maintain the public peace, and such defenders of a national church, are a lasting disgrace to any government. Mr. Wesley adds, "No wonder that the mob so encouraged, should say there is no law for the Methodists. Accordingly, like outlaws they treat them, breaking their houses, and taking away their goods at pleasure: extorting money from those who have it, and cruelly beating those who have it not. February 4, I spoke with those of our brethren who have this world's goods, and found them entirely resigned to the will of God: all thoughts of resistance, blessed be God, are over. The chief of them said to me, 'Naked came I into the world, and I can but go naked out of it.' They are resolved, by the grace of God, to follow my advice, and to suffer all things. Only I wished them to go round again to the justices and give information of their danger. Mr. Constable said he had just been with one of them, who redressed him only by bitter reproaches, that the rest were of the same mind, and could not plead ignorance, because the rioters had the boldness to set up papers inviting all the country to rise with them to destroy the Methodists. At noon I returned to Birmingham, having continued two days in the lion's den unhurt."

Mr. Wesley now set out for Nottingham, where he arrived on the 6th, and found that here also, the monster persecution was lifting up

its destructive head. "Our brethren," says he, "are violently driven from their place of meeting, pelted in the streets, &c., and mocked with vain promises of justice by the very man who underhand encourages the rioters. An honest Quaker has hardly restrained some of our brethren from resisting evil: but henceforth I hope, they will meekly turn the other cheek."

Mr. Wesley and his friends at Nottingham sent a person to Litchfield, to get intelligence of what mischief had been done in Staffordshire, by the rioters in their threatened insurrection. He returned on the ninth, and Mr. Wesley gives the following account. "He met our brother Ward, who had fled thither for refuge. The enemy had gone to the length of his chain: all the rabble of the county were gathered together, and laid waste all before them. I received a note from two of the sufferers, whose loss amounted to two hundred pounds. My heart rejoiced in the great grace which was given them; for not one resisted evil; but they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. We gave God glory, that satan was not suffered to touch their lives: they have lost all besides, and rejoice with joy unspeakable."

Mr. Wesley now went on to Newcastle, preaching every where, as he had opportunity. The year forty-four, was considered as a time of public danger. There was much talk of the Pretender, and the French threatened an invasion in support of his pretensions to the crown of England. In this critical situation of affairs, it was thought proper by many, that Mr. John Wesley should write an address to the king in the name of the Methodists. This address was accordingly drawn up * but not delivered. On the 6th of March Mr. Charles Wesley wrote to his brother on this subject, as follows, "My objection to your address in the name of the Methodists, is, that it would constitute us a sect: at least it would *seem to allow* that we are a body distinct from the National church; whereas we are only a sound part of the church. Guard against this, and in the name of the Lord address to-morrow." March 14, being at Birstal, a person informed him there was a constable who had a warrant in which his name was mentioned. Mr. Wesley sent for him, and found it was, "To summon witnesses to some treasonable words said to be spoken by one Westley." He was just leaving Birstal when this information was given him; but he now determined not to go forward for London as he intended, thinking it better to appear before the justices at Wakefield the next day, and look his enemies in the face. Accordingly, he rode to Wakefield the next morning, and waited on justice Burton at his inn, with two other justices, Sir Rowland Wynn, and the Rev. Mr. Zouch. He informed Mr. Burton, that he had seen a warrant of his, summoning witnesses of some treasonable words, said to be spoken by one Westley: that he had put off his journey to London, that he might answer whatever

* See Mr. John Wesley's Works, vol. xxviii. page 209, where the address itself is inserted.

should be laid to his charge. Mr. Burton replied, "he had nothing to say against him, and he might depart." Mr. Wesley answered, "That is not sufficient without clearing my character, and that of many innocent people, whom their enemies are pleased to call Methodists." "'Vindicate them,' said my brother clergyman, 'that you will find a very hard task.' I answered, 'as hard as you may think it, I will engage to prove that all of them, to a man, are true members of the Church of England, and loyal subjects of his Majesty King George.' I then desired they would administer to me the oaths; and added, 'I wish, gentlemen, that you could send for every Methodist in England, and give them all the same opportunity you do me, of declaring their loyalty upon oath. Justice Burton said, he was informed that we constantly prayed for the Pretender in all our societies, or nocturnal meetings, as Mr. Zouch called them. I answered, 'the very reverse is true. We constantly pray for his Majesty King George, by name. Here are such hymns (showing them) as we sing in our societies. Here is a sermon which I preached before the university, and another preached there by my brother. Here are his appeals and a few more tracts, containing an account of our principles and practices.' Here I gave them our books, and was bold enough to say, I am as true a Church of England man, and as loyal a subject as any man in the kingdom. They all cried that was impossible. But it was not my business to dispute, and as I could not answer till the witnesses appeared, I withdrew without further delay.

"While I waited at a neighbor's house, the constable from Birstal, whose heart the Lord had touched, was brought to me by one of the brethren. He told me that he had summoned the principal witness, Mary Castle, on whose information the warrant was granted. She was setting out on horseback when the news came that I was not gone forward to London, as they expected, but had returned to Wakefield. Hearing this she turned back and declared to him that she did not hear the treasonable words herself, but another woman had told her so. Three more witnesses, who were to swear to my words, retracted likewise, and knew nothing of the matter. The fifth, Mr. Woods, an alehouse-keeper, is forthcoming it seems, in the afternoon. I now plainly see the consequence of not appearing here to look my enemies in the face. Had I gone on my journey, there would have been witnesses enough, and oaths enough, to stir up a persecution against the Methodists. I took the witnesses' names, and a copy of the warrant as follows.

"'WEST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE.

"'To the Constable of Birstal, of the said Riding, or Deputy.

"'THESE are, in his Majesty's name, to require and command you to summon Mary Castle, of Birstal aforesaid, and all other such person or persons as you are informed can give any information against one

Westley, or any other of the Methodist preachers, for speaking any treasonable words or exhortations, as praying for the banished, or the Pretender, &c. to appear before me, and other of his majesty's Justices of the Peace for the said Riding, by the White Hart in Wakefield, on the 15th of March instant, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, to be examined, and to declare the truth of what they and each of them know touching the premises: and that you likewise make a return thereof, before us on the same day. Fail not. Given under my hand the tenth of March, 1744. E. BURTON.'

"Between two and three o'clock, Mr. Woods came, and started back on seeing me, as if he had trod upon a serpent. One of the brethren took hold of him, and told me he trembled every joint of him. The justice's clerk had bid the constable bring Woods to him as soon as ever he came. But notwithstanding the clerk's instructions, Woods frankly confessed, now he was come, he had nothing to say, and would not have come at all, if they had not forced him.

"I waited at the door till seven in the evening, while they were examining the disaffected. I took public notice of Okerhousen, the Moravian teacher; but not of Mr. Kendrick. When all their business was over, and I had been insulted at their door from eleven in the morning till seven at night, I was sent for and asked, 'what would Mr. Wesley desire?' *Wesley.* 'I desire nothing but to know what is alleged against me.' Justice Burton said, 'what hope of truth from him?' Then addressing himself to me, 'Here are two of your brethren, one so silly it is a shame he should ever set up for a teacher; and the other has a thousand lies and equivocations upon oath. He has not wit enough, or he would make a complete Jesuit.' I looked round and said, 'I see none of my brethren here, but this gentleman,' pointing to the Reverend Justice, who looked as if he did not thank me for claiming him. *Burton.* 'Why, do you not know this man?' pointing to Kendrick. *Wesley.* 'Yes sir, very well: for two years ago I expelled him from our society in London, for setting up for a preacher.' To this poor Kendrick assented; which put a stop to further reflections on the Methodists. Justice Burton then said, I might depart, for they had nothing against me. *Wesley.* 'Sir, that will not satisfy me; I cannot depart till my character be fully cleared. It is no trifling matter: even my life is concerned in the charge.' *Burton.* 'I did not summon you to appear.' *Wesley.* 'I was the person meant by one Westley, and my supposed words were the occasion of your order, which I read signed with your name.' *Burton.* 'I will not deny my orders, I did send to summon the witnesses.' *Wesley.* 'Yes; and I took down their names from the constable's paper. The principal witness, Mary Castle, was setting out, but hearing I was here, she turned back, and declared to the constable, she only heard another say, that I should speak treason. Three

more of the witnesses recanted for the same reason: and Mr. Woods, who is here, says he has nothing to say, and should not have come, had he not been forced by the minister. Had I not been here, he would have had enough to say; and you would have had witnesses and oaths enough; but I suppose, my coming has prevented theirs.' One of the justices added, 'I suppose so too.'

"They all seemed fully satisfied, and would have had me to have been so too. But I insisted on their hearing Mr. Woods. *Burton.* 'Do you desire he may be called as an evidence for you?' *Wesley.* 'I desire he may be heard as an evidence against me, if he has aught to lay to my charge.' Then Mr. Zouch asked Mr. Woods, what he had to say? What were the words I had spoken. Woods was as backward to speak as they to hear him: but was at last compelled to say, 'I have nothing to say against the gentleman; I only heard him pray, that the Lord would call home his banished ones.' *Zouch.* 'But were there no words before or after, which pointed to these troublesome times?' *Woods.* 'No: none at all.' *Wesley.* 'It was on February the 12th, before the earliest news of the invasion. But if folly and malice may be interpreters, any words, which any of you gentlemen, may speak, may be construed into treason.' *Zouch.* 'It is is very true.' *Wesley.* 'Now, gentlemen, give me leave to explain my own words. I had no thoughts of praying for the Pretender; but for those who confess themselves strangers and pilgrims upon earth; who seek a country, knowing this is not their home. The Scriptures, yes sir (to the clergyman) know that the Scriptures speak of us as captive exiles, who are absent from the Lord, while present in the body. We are not at home till we are in heaven.' *Zouch.* 'I thought you would so explain the words, and it is a fair interpretation'—I asked if they were all satisfied? They said they were; and cleared me as fully as I desired. I then asked them again, to administer to me the oaths. Mr. Zouch looked on my sermon, and asked who ordained me. I answered, the Archbishop, and Bishop of London, in the same week. He said, with the rest, it was quite unnecessary, since I was a clergyman, and student of Christ Church, and had preached before the university, and taken the oaths before. Yet I mentioned it again, till they acknowledged in explicit terms, 'That my loyalty was unquestionable.' I then presented Sir Rowland and Mr. Zouch with the appeal, and took my leave."

Mr. Wesley now returned to Birstal, where he preached, and then left Yorkshire. He came to Derby and Nottingham; at the last of which places, the mob was become outrageous, under the patronage of the mayor. The Methodists presented a petition to the judge, as he passed through the town, and he gave the mayor a severe reprimand, and encouraged them to apply for relief if they were further molested. But the mayor paid no regard to the judge, any longer than while he was present. On the 22d of March Mr. Wesley ar-

rived safe in London. Here he continued his labors till the beginning of May, when he went down to Bristol, and returned in about eight days. There was at this time a Thomas Williams, who had been admitted to preach in the Foundery, and who had acquired considerable influence among the people. He applied for ordination, was disappointed, and laid the blame chiefly on Mr. Wesley, who had been as a father to him, and rendered him every friendly office in his power. He now showed himself unworthy of such friendship. Mr. Wesley observes, "He answers the character one of his inmates gave me of him. 'I never thought him more than a speaker: I can see no grace he has. His conversation is quite contrary to the gospel, light and vain. He is haughty, revengeful, headstrong, and unmanageable.' June 15, I was grieved to hear more and more of W—s ingratitude. A lying spirit seems to have taken full possession of him. There is nothing so gross or improbable which he does not say." By lies and insinuating arts, he was too successful in prejudicing some of Mr. Wesley's friends against him. Alas! how little use do the people make of their understanding! how easily do they suffer their eyes to be blinded, and their hearts to be embittered by artful men, against those who are honestly laboring to do them good! It is truly wonderful to observe, how soon they give themselves up to believe the most improbable stories which malice can invent, against their best friends; how quickly they drink deep into the spirit of religious persecution, even of those very persons, whom a little before they loved as their own souls. This was in some measure the case at present, and I wish it was the only instance among the Methodists, in which the people have suffered themselves to become the dupes of artful and designing men. Mr. Wesley's mind was a good deal affected on this occasion, and he wrote thus to a friend. "Be not weary of well-doing, or overcome of evil. You see, that our calling is to suffer all things. Pray for me, that I also may endure unto the end: for a thousand times I cry out, the burden of this people is more than I am able to bear. O my good friend, you do not know them! Such depth of ingratitude I did not think was possible among the devils in hell."—"At night I was informed that a friend had entertained the deepest prejudice against me, on supposition that I meant her in a late discourse. Lord, what is man! what is friendship!"

"June 24. Our brethren Hodges, Taylor, and Meriton, assisted us at the sacrament. At one love-feast we were six ordained ministers. Monday the 25th, we opened our conference,* with solemn prayer and the Divine blessing. I preached with much assistance. We continued in conference the rest of the week, settling our doctrines, practice, and discipline, with great love and unanimity."

* This was the first conference. See the Minutes.

Mr. Wesley spent the remaining part of this year in travelling, and preaching the gospel, with great zeal, diligence, and success in many parts of the kingdom, from the Land's End to Newcastle. July 9th, he left London and arrived in Bristol the next day. On the 13th he set out for Cornwall, where he had the pleasure of seeing the word of God greatly prosper under his ministry. The joy which the society expressed, at his arrival in St. Ives, is beyond the power of words to describe: and every where he was received by great numbers of the people, as the messenger of God, for good. Such was the success of the gospel in Cornwall, this year, that in some places the inhabitants of a whole parish seemed entirely changed in their amusements and morals. Persecution raged in other places with great bitterness; but this did not much obstruct the progress of the work. It quickened the zeal of those who had experienced the power of gospel truth, and united them together in brotherly love: it made them attentive to their conduct, and diligent in the means of grace, lest they should give the enemy, watching for their halting, any cause of triumph. When professors of religion are daily in danger, by persecution, of losing every thing they have in this world, and perhaps their lives too, they more sensibly feel the importance of the good things of another life, and more earnestly endeavor to secure them as their eternal inheritance. Mr. Wesley, as usual, went through evil report and good report, was abused and caressed, by different classes of the people; but being intent on his work he was little affected by either. Having labored in Cornwall, as a faithful minister of Christ, near four weeks, during which time he had preached the gospel in most parts of the county, he left it, and coming to Minehead passed over into Wales, and came safe to Bristol on the 17th of August.

August 22. Mr. Wesley arrived at Oxford, where he met his brother, the Rev. Messrs. Piers and Meriton, and a great company of the brethren. Mr. John Wesley was to preach before the university, at St. Mary's, on the 24th. He says, "My brother bore his testimony before a crowded audience, much increased by the races. Never have I seen a more attentive congregation: they did not suffer a word to slip them. Some of the heads of colleges stood up the whole time, and fixed their eyes upon him. If they can endure sound doctrine, like his, he will surely leave a blessing behind him. The Vice Chancellor sent after him, and desired his notes, which he sealed up and sent immediately." *

He now returned to Bristol, and on the 26th of September came up to London. Thomas Williams had invented so many stories, to injure him in the opinion of the people, and asserted them with so much confidence, that they had made an ill impression on the minds of many of his friends. These calumnies, however, were so direcly

* See Mr. John Wesley's Works, vol. xxviii. page 233, where the agreement between the two accounts is striking and pleasing.

contrary to Mr. Wesley's habits of life, being always in the company of one friend or other, and almost constantly travelling from place to place, that they were altogether incredible; and nothing but the confidence with which they were asserted, could possibly have made an impression on any member of the society. Those who wish to propagate slander with success, are unusually confident in their assertions, and zealous in their endeavors. They invent a number of plausible pretences for their zeal; and by this and the boldness of their assertions, impose on those who are unacquainted with the arts of designing men to deceive.

Mr. Wesley, conscious of his innocence, and thinking the circumstances of this case so clear, that he wanted no public defence, appointed a day, when those who had been troubled with any reports concerning him, or his brother, might meet him. In this conference, one who had been led away by the lies of Thomas Williams, asked pardon of God and of Mr. Wesley. He observes, "O! how easy and delightful it is, to forgive one who says, I repent. Lord grant me power as truly to forgive them who persist to injure me." I apprehend, that he has reference here to Williams, and perhaps to a few others, too much prejudiced to come to him.

October 10, he set out for the North, travelling through the societies to Newcastle, and every where strengthening the brethren, and convincing gainsayers with great success. He labored sometimes in Newcastle and the neighboring places; and having sustained great bodily fatigue, and escaped many dangers in travelling through deep snow, at this unfavorable season of the year, he again reached London in safety, on the 29th of December.

In 1745, Mr. Wesley confined his labors chiefly to London, Bristol, (including the neighboring places) and Wales. August 1, he observes, "We began our conference, with Mr. Hodges, four of our assistants, Herb. Jenkins, and Mr. Gwynne. We continued it five days, and parted in great harmony and love." On the 25th, he was in Wales, and Mr. Gwynne sent his servant to show him the way to Garth; but having some time before sprained his leg, and having taken too much exercise after the accident, he was unable to go; and at length left Wales, without visiting that agreeable family. The following is a remarkable instance of his zeal in doing good to the vilest and most wretched of human beings. October 9, "After preaching at Bath, a woman desired to speak with me. She had been in our society; but left it through offence, and fell by little and little into the depth of vice and misery. I called Mrs. Naylor to hear her mournful account. She had lived some time in a wicked house, in Avon-street: confessed it was hell to her, to see our people pass by to the preaching; but knew not what to do, nor how to escape. We bid her fly for her life, and not once look behind her. Mrs. Naylor kept her with herself till the morning, and then I carried her with us in the

coach to London, and delivered her to the care of our sister Davey. Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire!"

February 3, 1746. He opened the new chapel in Wapping, and preached from 1 Cor. xv. 1. "Moreover brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand." The next day he wrote to a friend, expressing his apprehensions that God was about to pour out heavy judgments on the nation. He says to his friend, "You allow us one hundred years to fill up the measure of our iniquity; you cannot more laugh at my vain fear, than I at your vain confidence." This, and the preceding year, were times of danger and national alarm; and it is observable that religious people are more apprehensive of divine judgments, at such seasons, than other persons. Those fearful apprehensions have been falsely attributed to superstition; but I think they arise from a more rational and laudable principle. Religious persons have a more clear knowledge than others, of the enormity and guilt of national sins; they see more clearly the mercies enjoyed, and know more perfectly the holiness and vengeance of God against sin, when once a nation has filled up the measure of its iniquity; and hence arises their fear, in any public danger, lest this should then be the case. We have not indeed, any certain rule of judging when a nation has filled up the measure of its iniquity, and is ripe for divine vengeance; and therefore may often be mistaken in applying a general principle, in itself true, to a particular instance. But every good man will rejoice, when, in times of public disturbance and danger, God is better to us than our fears and conscious guilt suggested. This was the case of Mr. Wesley. Being at Bristol when he first heard the news of the victory at Culloden, over the rebel army, he observes, "I spoke at night on, 'He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.' We rejoiced unto him with reverence, and thankfully observed the remarkable answer of that petition,

> All their strength o'erturn, o'erthrow,
> Snap their spears and break their swords;
> Let the daring rebels know,
> The battle is the Lord's.

Oh! that in this reprieve, before the tide is turned, we may know the time of our visitation."

May 29. He observes, "In conference, I found many of our children in a thriving condition; not one of those who are justified, dreams that he is sanctified at once, and wants nothing more." Mr. Charles Wesley was an uniform and steady opposer of the opinion of his brother, that a person is sanctified at once, by a simple act of faith, in the manner he is justified or pardoned. And there are many among the Methodists who think the Scriptures give no countenance to this opinion. Such a method of proceeding, is certainly not analogous to the operations of Divine Power, in the productions of nature:

nor does it accord with the common order in which the mind acquires knowledge and experience, and which appears to be founded on the nature of our faculties. But this subject will be more fully discussed, in explaining the religious opinions of Mr. John Wesley.

What has already been said of Mr. Charles Wesley, sufficiently demonstrates that he was animated with a disinterested and laudable zeal for the promotion of christian knowledge, among the middling and lower classes of the people. Both his doctrines and practice, tended to discourage a party spirit, and to promote brotherly love among all denominations of Christians in the kingdom. Those who differ from him in judgment, and are disposed to censure what has been called his irregularity, must notwithstanding, acknowledge the goodness of his motives, and admire his indefatigable diligence. He seldom staid long in one place, but preached the Gospel in almost every corner of the kingdom. In fatigues, in dangers, and in ministerial labors, he was, for many years, not inferior to his brother; and his sermons were generally more awakening and useful. Neither he nor his brother travelled alone; some person always accompanying them, whom they treated rather as a companion, than as a servant. This plan was not adopted merely for the sake of convenience; but that they might constantly have persons about them who might be witnesses of their conduct and behavior. This was prudent, considering the false reports which were propagated concerning them. June 2, Mr. Charles Wesley left Bristol, accompanied with a Mr. Waller; intending to visit the brethren in Cornwall. He took a large circuit in his way thither; preaching sometimes in a house, and occasionally in the street, where he met with various treatment from the people. At Tavistock, he found great opposition, the people behaving almost like wild beasts: they were restrained however, from doing any mischief. Here, some of Mr. Whitefield's society at Plymouth, met him, and importuned him to come and preach among them, and he complied with their request. Mr. Whitefield was his particular friend: and no man, perhaps, ever felt the attachment of friendship, in a stronger degree than Mr. Charles Wesley: yet on account of some difference in opinion he determined to preach, not in their house, but in the streets, or fields only. He might perhaps be afraid, lest he should say something in the warmth of an extempore discourse, which would give offence, or promote disputings among them. At length, however, their importunity overcame his resolution and caution. He met them in their house, prayed with them, and endeavored to provoke them to love and good works. He soon found that God was with them; who does not make those distinctions among his true worshippers, for speculative errors, which men are apt to imagine. Mr. Wesley observes, "I found no difference between them and our children at Kingswood, or the Foundery." He continued a few days, till the 23d, with this earnest artless people, who

seemed ready to devour the word. During his stay here, he went over to the Dock, and preached Christ crucified to a great multitude of hearers. The word was as a fire, melting down all it touched. He adds, "We mourned and rejoiced together in him that loved us. I have not known such a refreshing time since I left Bristol." Sunday, June 22, he preached again on a hill in Stoke church-yard, to upwards of four thousand persons by computation. Some reviled at first, but Mr. Wesley turning to them and speaking a few words, silenced them, the generality behaving as men who feared God. When he had finished his discourse they followed him with blessings: only one man cursed, and called him Whitefield the second.

He now prepared to leave them. "Our own children," says he, "could not have expressed greater affection to us at parting. If possible, they would have plucked out their own eyes, and have given them to us. Several offered me money; but I told them I never accepted any. Others would have persuaded Mr. Waller to take it; but he walked in the same steps and said their love was sufficient."

Mr. Wesley reached Gwennup, in the West of Cornwall, on the 26th of June, and he gives the following account of the state of the people. "Upon examination of each separately, I found the society in a prosperous way: their suffering had been for their furtherance, and for the furtherance of the Gospel. The opposers behold and wonder at their steadfastness and godly conversation. June 29, my evening congregation was computed to be upwards of five thousand. They all stood uncovered, kneeled at prayer, and hung *narrantis ab ore.** For an hour and a half, I invited them back to their Father, and felt no hoarseness or weariness afterwards. I spent an hour and a half more with the society, warning them against pride, and the love of the creature; and stirring them up to universal obedience."

"Monday, June 30. Both sheep and shepherds, had been scattered in the late cloudy day of persecution: but the Lord gathered them again, and kept them together by their own brethren; who began to exhort their companions, one or more in every society. No less than four have sprung up in Gwennup. I talked closely with each, and found no reason to doubt that God had used them thus far. I advised, and charged them, not to stretch themselves beyond their line, by speaking out of the society, or fancying themselves public teachers. If they keep within their bounds as they promise, they may be useful in the church: and I would to God, that all the Lord's people were prophets like these."

"July 3. At Lidgeon, I preached Christ crucified, and spake with the classes, who seem much in earnest. Showed above a thousand sinners at Sithney, the love and compassion of Jesus, towards them. Many who came from Helstone, a town of rebels and persecutors, were struck, and confessed their sins, and declared they would never

* *On the mouth of the speaker.* A strong metaphorical expression for attention.

more be found fighting against God.—July 6. At Gwennup, near two thousand persons listened to those gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, 'Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden,' &c. Half of them were from Redruth, which seems on the point of surrendering to the Prince of Peace. The whole country finds the benefit of the gospel. Hundreds, who follow not with us, have broken off their sins, and are outwardly reformed; and the persecutors in time past, will not now suffer a word to be spoken against this way. Some of those who fell off in the late persecution, desired to be present at the society."

"At St. Ives no one offered to make the least disturbance: indeed the whole place is outwardly changed in this respect. I walk the streets with astonishment, scarcely believing it is St. Ives. All opposition falls before us, or rather is fallen, and not yet suffered to lift up its head again. This also hath the Lord wrought."

"July 19. Rode to Sithney, where the word begins to take root. The rebels of Helstone threatened hard—they say all manner of evil of us. 'Papists we are, that is certain: and are for bringing in the Pretender.' Nay the vulgar are persuaded that I have brought him with me; and James Waller is the man. But law is to come from London to-night to put us all down, and set *a price* upon my head." It is hardly possible to conceive the danger of Mr. Wesley's situation, when such an opinion as this prevailed among the fierce tinners of Cornwall. But he trusted in God and was protected. He observes, "We had notwithstanding, a numerous congregation, and several of the persecutors. I declared my commission to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, &c. Many appeared convinced, and caught in the gospel net."

The next day being Sunday, Mr. Wesley preached again, and near one hundred of the fiercest rioters were present. A short time before these men had cruelly beat the sincere hearers, not sparing the women and children. It was said, the minister of the parish had hired them for that purpose. But now, these very men, expecting a disturbance, came to protect Mr. Wesley, and said they would lose their lives in his defence. The whole congregation was attentive and quiet.

It is not easy, perhaps impossible, to give a satisfactory reason on natural principles, for that sudden and entire change which sometimes takes place on these occasions, in the minds of the most violent opposers of the gospel. I believe the most attentive observer could never discover any external circumstance, sufficient to produce the change. If we admit a particular providence, and a divine supernatural influence on the mind of man, the matter becomes plain and easy; but without taking these into account, both this and many other things appear inexplicable mysteries. I believe the chief objections which philosophers, who make high pretensions to reason, have made to

many Christians on these two points, have originated in a supposition, that a particular providence, and a supernatural influence on the mind, are not directed by fixed laws, analogous to the operations of Divine power in the works of nature; and that a supernatural influence must supersede or derange the operations of our natural faculties. But in both these things, I apprehend, they are mistaken. It appears to me, that the interpositions of Providence in the affairs of men, and a divine influence on the human mind, are under regulations, or laws, according to the economy of the gospel, which are as wisely adapted to attain the end proposed, in the circumstances of the subjects to which they are applied, and operate with as much certainty, under these circumstances, as the laws by which the heavenly bodies are preserved within their respective orbits, and directed in their various motions. The subjects of a particular providence, and of divine influence, in this view of them, are moral agents, possessed of active powers; which I apprehend are essentially different from the re-action, or the repulsive force of inanimate bodies. But were moral agents to be conformable to these laws of a particular providence, and of divine influence, in the economy of the gospel, I have no doubt but they would operate with as much regularity and certainty, as the laws of motion. Nor is it necessary that a supernatural influence on the mind, should either supersede or derange the operations of our natural faculties. It gives efficacy to the external means of instruction, and co-operates with them; it gives vigor and strength to the soul, in the acquisition of knowledge and virtue on the gospel plan, and enables us to attain such degrees of them, as could not be attained under any circumstances, by our merely natural powers. Indeed, when I consider the gospel, not only as a revelation from God of truths useful to man, but as the means divinely appointed, of redeeming him from sin and death, and by a resurrection restoring him to immortal life and glory: when I consider the connected series of prophecies, which for ages prepared the world for its reception as a universal blessing; the manifestations of divine power at its promulgation and establishment; the glory attributed to Jesus Christ, in the Scriptures as our Redeemer and Advocate; and the relation which he constantly bears to his people, as their Captain, and the Head of his Church; it appears to me, altogether derogatory from the wisdom and goodness of God to suppose, that the gospel, connected with all these circumstances, should now be left in the world as a deserted orphan, to shift for itself in the best manner it can, without any divine influence, or superintending care. This supposition renders the gospel unworthy of the sublime descriptions given of it in the Old and New Testament; and reduces it to a mere system of Ethics, or moral precepts, as inadequate to the great and noble purpose of man's redemption, as the moral teachings of Socrates or Plato.

Whatever may be said of these reasonings, Mr. Wesley thought he

was in the way of his duty, and under the protection of a particular providence; and pursued his labors with great diligence, confidence, and success. He was informed that the people of St. Just, being scattered by persecution, had wandered into by-paths of error and sin, and had been confirmed therein by their exhorter. He visited them, and spake with each member of the society; and adds, "I was amazed to find them just the reverse of what they had been represented. Most of them had kept their first love, even while men were riding over their heads, and while they were passing through fire and water. Their exhorter appears a solid humble Christian, raised up to stand in the gap, and keep the trembling sheep together." The next day he again talked with some of the society, and says, "I adored the miracle of grace, which has kept these sheep in the midst of wolves. Well may the despisers behold and wonder. Here is a bush, burning in the fire yet not consumed! What have they not done to crush this rising sect; but lo! they prevail nothing! For one preacher they cut off, twenty spring up. Neither persecutions nor threatenings, flattery nor violence, dungeons, or sufferings of various kinds, can conquer them. Many waters cannot quench this little spark which the Lord hath kindled, neither shall the floods of persecution drown it."

"Monday, July 28. I began my week's experiment of leaving off tea: but my flesh protested against it. I was but half awake and half alive, all day: and my head-ache so increased towards noon, that I could neither speak nor think. So it was for the two following days, with the addition of a violent diarrhœa, occasioned by my milk diet. This so weakened me, that I could hardly sit my horse. However, I made a shift to ride to Gwennup, and preach and meet the society. Being very faint and weary, I would afterwards have eat something, but could get nothing proper."

The congregations had been large in most places, during his stay in the West of Cornwall: but it being generally known that he was now preparing to leave it, they were greatly increased. Sunday, August 10, being at Gwennup, he observes, "Nine or ten thousand, by computation, listened with all eagerness, while I recommended them to God, and the word of his grace. For near two hours I was enabled to preach repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. I broke out, again and again, into prayer and exhortation; believing not one word would return empty. Seventy years' sufferings would be overpaid, by one such opportunity. Never had we so large an effusion of the spirit as in the society; I could not doubt at that time, either of their perseverance, or my own: and still I am humbly confident, that we shall stand together among the multitude which no man can number."

The next day, August 11, being filled with thankfulness to God, for the mercies shown to himself and the people, he wrote a thanksgiving hymn, which begins thus,

"All thanks be to God,
Who scatters abroad
Throughout every place,
By the least of his servants, his savor of grace:
Who the victory gave
The praise let him have;
For the work he hath done,
All honor and glory to Jesus alone!" &c.

He now travelled forward to St. Endys, and preached on, "Repent and believe the gospel." His friends, the Rev. Messrs. Bennet and Tomson, were present. "As I was concluding," says he, "a gentleman rode up to me very fiercely, and bid me come down. We exchanged a few words, and talked together more largely in the house. The poor drunken lawyer went away in as good a humor as he was then capable of. I had more difficulty to get clear of a different antagonist, one Adams, an old enthusiast, who travels through the land, as overseer of all the ministers."

Having received many letters from Mr. Kinsman's family, Mr. Jenkins, and others at Plymouth, importuning him to favor them with another visit on his return, he complied with their request, on the 14th of August; and on the 18th, he took boat at the Dock, accompanied by several friends, to meet a congregation at some distance. He observes, "The rough stormy sea tried our faith. None stirred, or we must have been overset. In two hours, our invisible Pilot brought us safe to land, thankful for our deliverance, humbled for our littleness of faith, and more endeared to each other by our common danger. We found thousands waiting for the word of life. The Lord made it a channel of grace. I spoke and prayed alternately for two hours. The moonlight added to the solemnity. Our eyes overflowed with tears, and our hearts with love: scarce a soul but was affected with grief or joy. We drank into one spirit, and were persuaded, that neither life nor death, things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Mr. Wesley continued his labors daily, visiting various places in his way to Bristol, where he arrived on the 28th, and came safe to London on the 2d of September. He staid here a fortnight, during which he became acquainted with Mr. Edward Perronet, a sensible, pious, and amiable young man. September the 16th, they set out, accompanied by several friends, to pay a visit to the Rev. Mr. Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham, in Kent; a man of a most artless child-like spirit, and zealous for the doctrines of the Gospel. But his preaching and godly conversation, had, as yet, but little influence on the minds of the people, who, through ignorance, opposed the truth with great violence. It is probable, notice had been given, that Mr. Wesley would preach in the church. "As soon," says he, "as I began preaching, the wild beasts began roaring, stamping, blas-

pheming, ringing the bells, and turning the church into a bear-garden. I spoke on for half an hour, though only the nearest could hear. The rioters followed us to Mr. Perronet's house, raging, threatening, and throwing stones. Charles Perronet hung over me, to intercept the blows. They continued their uproar, after we got into the house." Mr. Wesley returned to London, with Mr. E. Perronet, and October the 9th, being appointed as a day of public thanksgiving for national mercies, the Foundery was filled at four in the morning. Mr. Wesley preached from those words, "How shall I give thee up Ephraim?" He adds, "Our hearts were melted by the long-suffering love of God; whose power we found disposing us to the true thanksgiving. It was a day of solemn rejoicing. O that from this moment, all our rebellions against God might cease!"

Though the winter was now approaching, and travelling far north, is both difficult and dangerous at this season, yet Mr. Wesley, in a poor state of health, determined to take his Northern journey as far as Newcastle-upon-Tyne. October 10, he tells us, "I set out for Newcastle with my young companion and friend, E. Perronet, whose heart the Lord hath given me. His family has been kept from us so long by a mistaken notion, that we were against the church." He visited the brethren in Staffordshire, and on the 15th, preached at Tippen-green. After preaching in the evening, a friend invited him to sleep at his house at no great distance from the place. Soon after they were sat down, the mob beset the house, and beating at the door, demanded entrance. Mr. Wesley ordered the door to be set open, and the house was immediately filled. "I sat still," says he, "in the midst of them for half an hour. I was a little concerned for E. Perronet, lest such rough treatment at his first setting out, should daunt him. But he abounded in valor, and was for reasoning with the wild beasts, before they had spent any of their violence. He got a deal of abuse thereby, and not a little dirt, both of which he took very patiently. I had no design to preach; but being called upon by so unexpected a congregation, I rose at last, and read, 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory.' While I reasoned with them of judgment to come, they grew calmer by little and little. I then spake to them, one by one, till the Lord had disarmed them all. One who stood out the longest, I held by the hand, and urged the love of Christ crucified, till in spite of both his natural and diabolical courage, he trembled like a leaf. I was constrained to break out in prayer for him. Our leopards were all become lambs; and very kind we were at parting. Near midnight the house was clear and quiet. We gave thanks to God for our salvation and slept in peace."

October 21, Mr. Wesley preached at Dewsbury, where John Nelson had gathered many stray sheep, and formed a society. The minister did not condemn them unheard, but talked with them, examined

into the doctrine they had been taught, and its effects on their lives. When he found, that as many as had been affected by the preaching, were evidently reformed, and brought to church and sacrament, he testified his approbation of the work, and rejoiced that sinners were converted to God. This conduct certainly deserves great praise; and had all the ministers of the Established Church acted with the same candor, it is probable they would have served the interests of the church better than they have done, and the work would have been much more extended than we have yet seen it.

October 25. They arrived at Newcastle, where Mr. E. Perronet was immediately taken ill of the smallpox, and had a very narrow escape for his life. October 31, Mr. Wesley observes, "Rode to Wickham, where the curate sent his love to me, with a message that he was glad of my coming, and obliged to me for endeavoring to do good among his people, for none wanted it more: and he heartily wished me good luck in the name of the Lord. He came, with another clergyman, and staid both preaching and the meeting of the society." As such instances of liberality and candor are not very common among ministers of the gospel, they deserve the greater commendation, who have resolution to set so good an example.

Mr. Wesley continued his labors in, and about Newcastle, till the 27th of November, when he rode to Hexham, at the pressing request of Mr. Wardrobe, a Dissenting minister, and others. He observes, "I walked directly to the market-place, and called sinners to repentance. A multitude of them stood staring at me; but all quiet. The Lord opened my mouth and they drew nearer and nearer: stole off their hats, and listened: none offered to interrupt, but one unfortunate squire, who could get no one to second him. His servants and the constables, hid themselves: one he found and bid him go and take me down. The poor constable simply answered, 'Sir, I cannot have the face to do it, for what harm does he do?' Several Papists attended, and the church minister who had refused me his pulpit with indignation. However he came to hear with his own ears; I wish all who hang us first, would, like him, try us afterwards."

"I walked back to Mr. Ord's, through the people, who acknowledged, 'It is the truth and none can speak against it.' A constable followed, and told me, 'Sir Edward Blacket orders you to *disperse* the town, (depart, I suppose he meant) and not raise a disturbance here.' I sent my respects to Sir Edward, and said, if he would give me leave I would wait upon him and satisfy him. He soon returned with an answer, that Sir Edward would have nothing to say to me: but if I preached again and raised a disturbance, he would put the law in execution against me. I answered, that I was not conscious of breaking any law of God or man; but if I did, was ready to suffer the penalty: that, as I had not given notice of preaching again at the Cross, I should not preach again *at that place*, nor cause a dis-

turbance any where. I charged the constable, a trembling, submissive soul, to assure his worship, that I reverenced him for his office' sake. The only place I could get to preach in was a cock-pit, and I expected satan would come and fight me on his own ground. Squire Roberts, the justice's son, labored hard to raise a mob, for which I was to be answerable; but the very boys ran away from him, when the poor squire persuaded them to go down to the cock-pit and cry fire. I called, in words then first heard in that place, 'Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.' God struck the hard rock, and the waters gushed out. Never have I seen a people more desirous of knowing the truth, at the first hearing. I passed the evening in conference with Mr. Wardrobe; O that all our Dissenting ministers were like-minded, then would all dissentions cease forever.* November 28, at six, we assembled again in our chapel, the cock-pit. I imagined myself in the Pantheon, or some heathen temple, and almost scrupled preaching there at first; but we found the earth is the

* It is uncertain, whether Mr. Wardrobe was at this time settled as a Dissenting minister at Hexham. He was afterwards, however, fixed at Bathgate in Scotland, where he labored as a faithful minister of Christ till his death. He was a man of great piety, and of more liberality of mind than was commonly found among the Scotch ministers at that time. He cultivated an acquaintance with the Methodists, and on the 22d of May, 1755, preached in their house at Newcastle, to the no small amazement and displeasure of some of his zealous countrymen. He died on the 7th of May, 1756, and Mr. Adams, minister at Falkirk, gives the following account of his death, in a letter to Mr. Gillies. "On Friday night, about ten, I witnessed Mr. Wardrobe's entrance into the joy of his Lord. But ah! who can help mourning the loss of the Church of Christ? His amiable character gave him a distinguished weight and influence; which his Lord had given him to value, only for its subserviency to his honor and glory. He was suddenly taken ill on the last Lord's day, and from the first moment believed it was for death. I went to see him on Thursday evening, and heard some of the liveliest expressions of triumphant faith, zeal for the glory of Christ and the salvation of souls, mixed with the most amiable humility and modesty. 'Yet a little while,' said he, 'and this mortal shall put on immortality. Mortality shall be swallowed up of life: this vile body fashioned like to his glorious body! O for victory! I shall get the victory! I know in whom I have believed.' Then with a remarkably audible voice, lifting up his hands he cried out, 'O for a draught of the well of the water of life, that I may begin the song before I go off to the Church triumphant! I go forth in thy name, making mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only. I die at the feet of mercy.' Then stretching out his arms, he put his hand upon his head, and with the most serene and steady majestic eye, I ever saw, looking upward, he said, 'Crowns of grace, crowns of grace, and palms in their hands! O Lord God of truth, into thy hands I commend my spirit!' He says to me, 'You that are ministers, bear a proper testimony against the professors of this age, who have a form of godliness without the power.' Observing some of his people about his bed, he said, 'May I have some seals among you! O where will the ungodly and sinners of Bathgate appear? Labor all to be in Christ.' Then he stretched out his hand to several, and said, 'Farewell, farewell, farewell! And now, O Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee!' Once or twice he said, 'Let me be laid across the bed to expire, where I have sometimes prayed, and sometimes meditated with pleasure.' He expressed his grateful sense of the assiduous care which Mr. Wardrobe, of Cult, had taken of him; and on his replying, 'Too much could not be done for so valuable a life,' said, 'O speak not so, or you will provoke God. Glory be to God, that I have ever had any regard paid me for Christ's sake. I am greatly sunk under the event. O help me by your prayers, to get the proper submission and improvement.'"

Lord's, and the fulness thereof. His presence consecrated the place. Never have I found a greater sense of God, than while we were repeating his own prayer. I set before their eyes, Christ crucified. The rocks were melted, and gracious tears flowed. We knew not how to part. I distributed some books among them, which they received with the utmost eagerness; begging me to come again, and to send our preachers to them."

December 6. He says, "I visited one of our sick children, and received her blessings and prayers. December 18, I waked between three and four, in a temper of mind I have rarely felt on my birthday. My joy and thankfulness continued the whole day, to my own astonishment.—19th, called on Mr. —— (one of the friendly clergymen) at Wickham, whose countenance was changed. He had been with the bishop, who forbid his conversing with me. I marvel the prohibition did not come sooner."

Towards the end of the month, Mr. Wesley quitted these cold regions of the North, and began to move Southward. January 6 1747, he came to Grimsby, where he was saluted by a shouting mob In the evening he attempted to preach at the room, but the mob was so violent he could not proceed. At length one of the rioters aimed a severe blow at Mr. Wesley, which a friend who stood near him, received. Another of them cried out, "What, you dog, do you strike a clergyman?" and fell upon his comrade. Immediately every man's hand was against his fellow: they began fighting and beating one another, till, in a few minutes, the room was cleared of all disturbers; when Mr. Wesley preached for half an hour, without further molestation. On the 9th, at Hainton, he talked separately with the members of the little society, who were as sheep encompassed with wolves. The minister of the place had repelled them from the sacrament, and labored to stir up the whole town against them. It is probable they would have been worried to death, but for the chief man of the place, a professed Papist, who hindered these *good Protestants* from destroying their innocent brethren.

Mr. Wesley continued his labors for the good of the people, and the propagation of christian knowledge in Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Lancashire, and Staffordshire, till the 8th of February, and on the 10th, he arrived safe in London.* He continued here till the 23d, when he again commenced his peregrinations, in which he had new troubles and difficulties to encounter, even greater than any he had before experienced. On the 24th, he reached the Devizes in his way to Bristol, in company with Mr. Minton. They soon perceived that the enemies of religion had taken the alarm, and were mustering their forces for the battle. They began by ringing the bells back-

*See the exact correspondence between this account and Mr. John Wesley's printed Journal in his Works, vol. xxix. page 9.

ward, and running to and fro in the streets, as lions roaring for their prey. The curate's mob went in quest of Mr. Wesley to several places, particularly to Mr. Philips's, where it was expected he would preach.. They broke open, and ransacked the house; but not finding him there, they marched off to a Mr. Rogers's, where he, and several others being met together, were praying and exhorting one another to continue steadfast in the faith, and through much tribulation to enter the kingdom. The zealous curate, Mr. Innys, stood with them in the street dancing for joy. "This," says Mr. Wesley, "is he, who declared in the pulpit, as well as from house to house, 'That he himself heard me preach blasphemy before the University, and tell them, if you do not receive the Holy Ghost while I breathe upon you, ye are all damned.' He had been about the town several days, stirring up the people, and canvassing the gentry for their vote and interest; but could not raise a mob while my brother was here: the hour of darkness was not then fully come." What a disgrace to the governors of any church, that such a man as this should be supported as a minister in it. But we may observe, that it is a general rule, with all persecutors, to make those whom they persecute, appear to the people as absurd, or as wicked as possible. To accomplish their end, persecutors give full scope to invention and suspicion: and propagate with confidence, such things as they imagine will answer their purpose, without wishing to bring them to the test of reason and truth. In the present instance, Mr. Innys well knew, that what he asserted of Mr. Wesley, was false. I fear, we may fix it as a general rule, with very few exceptions, that any man, who has been a little practised in the ways of persecution, will not scruple to utter a falsehood, which seems very convenient for his purpose. Let us then, learn to judge truly of men and things; and when we see a man deeply prejudiced against another, or influenced by a spirit of persecution, let us give no credit to anything he may say, from the pulpit, from the press, or in conversation, till we have further evidence on the subject than his assertions. This will be the best method of suppressing persecution, and its concomitant, slander. O how careful should all ministers be, to avoid this snare of the Devil! The Methodist preachers, in particular; who have no shadow of claim to our esteem, as preachers, but in proportion to their integrity, piety, and zeal to do good.

Mr. Innys, by assiduity, and falsehood boldly asserted as truth, had engaged the gentlemen of the town in his party, and prevailed with them to encourage the mob. While they beset the house where Mr. Wesley, and the company with him, were assembled, he often heard his own name mentioned, with, "Bring him out, bring him out." He observes, "The little flock were less afraid than I expected; only one of our sisters fainted away." It being now dark, the besiegers blocked up the door with a wagon, and set up

lights lest Mr. Wesley should escape. One of the company however, got out unobserved, and with much entreaty prevailed on the mayor to come down. He came with two constables, and threatened the rioters; but so gently that no one regarded him. Having tore down the shutters of the shop, and broken the windows, it is wonderful they did not enter the house: but a secret hand seemed to restrain them. After a while they hurried away to the inn, where the horses were put up, broke open the stable door, and turned out the beasts. "In the mean time," says Mr. Wesley, "we were at a loss what to do; when God put it into the heart of our next door neighbor, a Baptist, to take us through a passage into his own house, offer us his bed, and engage for our security. We accepted his kindness and slept in peace."

February 25. "A day never to be forgotten. At seven o'clock, I walked quietly to Mrs. Philips's, and began preaching a little before the time appointed. For three quarters of an hour, I invited a few listening sinners to Christ. Soon after, Satan's whole army assaulted the house. We sat in a little ground room, and ordered all the doors to be thrown open. They brought a hand engine and began to play into the house. We kept our seats, and they rushed into the passage: just then Mr. Borough, the constable, came and seizing the spout of the engine, carried it off. They swore if he did not deliver it, they would pull down the house. At that time they might have taken us prisoners; we were close to them, and none to interpose: but they hurried out to fetch the larger engine. In the mean time we were advised to send for the mayor; but Mr. Mayor was gone out of town, in the sight of the people, which gave great encouragement to those who were already wrought up to a proper pitch by the curate, and the gentlemen of the town; particularly Mr. Sutton and Mr. Willy, Dissenters, the two leading men. Mr. Sutton, frequently came out to the mob, to keep up their spirits. He sent word to Mrs. Philips, that if she did not turn that fellow out to the mob, he would send them to drag him out. Mr. Willy, passed by again and again, assuring the rioters he would stand by them, and secure them from the law, do what they would."—What shall we say to these proceedings? There is no class of people, who cry out more loudly against persecution, than the Dissenters, when it happens to be their turn to be persecuted. The truth seems to be, that most denominations of Christians disavow, and condemn persecution in theory, and yet fall into the practice of it, when power and opportunity occur. How far the Roman Catholics, who have hitherto been consistent, and persecuted on principle, will now contradict the former practice of their own Church (if they should obtain the power of persecuting in these kingdoms) time only can discover: but there seems a very general inclination at present, to give them an opportunity, either of doing a great deal of mischief, or of retrieving their character in this respect,

by setting an example of moderation to other bodies of professing Christians.

The rioters "now began playing the larger engine; which broke the windows, flooded the rooms, and spoiled the goods. We were withdrawn to a small upper room, in the back part of the house; seeing no way to escape their violence, as they seemed under the full power of the old murderer. They first laid hold on the man who kept the society house, dragged him away, and threw him into the horse-pond; and it was said, broke his back.—We gave ourselves unto prayer, believing the Lord would deliver us; how, or when, we saw not; nor any possible way of escaping: we therefore stood still to see the salvation of God.—Every now and then, some or other of our friends would venture to us; but rather weakened our hands, so that we were forced to stop our ears, and look up. Among the rest, the mayor's maid came, and told us her mistress was in tears about me; and begged me to disguise myself in women's clothes, and try to make my escape. Her heart had been turned towards us by the conversion of her son, just on the brink of ruin. God laid his hand on the poor prodigal, and instead of running to sea, he entered the society.—The rioters without, continued playing their engine, which diverted them for some time; but their number and fierceness still increased; and the gentlemen supplied them with pitchers of ale, as much as they would drink. They were now on the point of breaking in, when Mr. Borough, thought of reading the proclamation: he did so at the hazard of his life. In less than the hour, of above a thousand wild beasts, none were left, but the guard. Our constable had applied to Mr. Street, the only justice in the town; who would not act. We found there was no help in man, which drove us closer to the Lord; and we prayed, with little intermission, the whole day.

"Our enemies at their return, made their main assault at the back door, swearing horribly, they would have me if it cost them their lives. Many seeming accidents concurred to prevent their breaking in. The man of the house came home, and instead of turning me out, as they expected, took part with us, and stemmed the tide for some time. They now got a notion, that I had made my escape; and ran down to the inn, and played the engine there. They forced the inn-keeper to turn out our horses, which he immediately sent to Mr. Clark's; which drew the rabble and their engine thither. But the resolute old man, charged and presented his gun, till they retreated.—Upon their revisiting us, we stood in jeopardy every moment. Such threatenings, curses, and blasphemies, I have never heard. They seemed kept out, by a continual miracle. I remembered the Roman senators, sitting in the forum, when the Gauls broke in upon them; but thought there was a fitter posture for Christians, and told my companion, they should take us off our knees.—We were kept from all hurry, and discomposure of spirit, by a Di-

vine power resting upon us. We prayed and conversed as freely, as if we had been in the midst of our brethren; and had great confidence that the Lord would, either deliver us from the danger, or in it.—In the height of the storm, just when we were falling into the hands of the drunken enraged multitude, Mr. Minton was so little disturbed that he fell fast asleep.

"They were now close to us on every side, and over our heads untiling the roof. A ruffian cried out, 'Here they are, behind the curtain.' At this time we fully expected their appearance, and retired to the furthermost corner of the room; and I said, THIS IS THE CRISIS. In that moment JESUS rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great CALM. We heard not a breath without, and wondered what was become of them. The silence lasted for three quarters of an hour, before any one came near us; and we continued in mutual exhortation and prayer, looking for deliverance. I often told my companions, Now God is at work for us; he is contriving our escape: he can turn these leopards into lambs; can command the heathen to bring his children on their shoulders, and make our fiercest enemies the instruments of our deliverance. About three o'clock Mr. Clark knocked at the door, and brought with him the persecuting constable. He said, 'Sir, if you will promise never to preach here again, the gentlemen and I will engage to bring you safe out of town.' My answer was, 'I shall promise no such thing—setting aside my office, I will not give up my birth-right as an Englishman, of visiting what place I please of his Majesty's dominions.' 'Sir,' said the Constable, 'we expect no such promise, that you will never come here again: only tell me, that it is not your *present* intention, that I may tell the gentlemen, who will then secure your quiet departure.' I answered, 'I cannot come again at this time, because I must return to London a week hence. But, *observe*, I make no promise of not preaching here, when the door is opened; and do not you say that I do.

"He went away with this answer, and we betook ourselves to prayer and thanksgiving. We perceived it was the Lord's doing, and it was marvellous in our eyes. The hearts of our adversaries were turned. Whether pity for us, or fear for themselves, wrought strongest, God knoweth; probably the latter; for the mob were wrought up to such a pitch of fury, that their masters dreaded the consequence, and therefore went about appeasing the multitude, and charging them not to touch us in our departure.

"While the constable was gathering his *posse*, we got our things from Mr. Clark's, and prepared to go forth. The whole multitude were without, expecting us, and saluted us with a general shout. The man Mrs. Naylor had hired to ride before her was, as we now perceived, one of the rioters. This hopeful guide was to conduct us out of the reach of his fellows. Mr. Minton and I took horse in the

face of our enemies, who began clamoring against us: the gentlemen were dispersed among the mob, to bridle them. We rode a slow pace up the street, the whole multitude pouring along on both sides, and attending us with loud acclamations—such fierceness and diabolical malice I have not before seen in human faces. They ran up to our horses as if they would swallow us, but did not know which was Wesley. We felt great peace and acquiescence in the honor done us, while the whole town were spectators of our march. When out of sight, we mended our pace, and about seven o'clock came to Wrexall. The news of our danger was got thither before us; but we brought the welcome tidings of our deliverance. We joined in hearty prayer to our Deliverer, singing the hymn,

'Worship, and thanks, and blessing,' &c.

"February 26, I preached at Bath, and we rejoiced like men who take the spoil. We continued our triumph at Bristol, and reaped the fruit of our labors and sufferings."

In the beginning of March, Mr. Wesley returned to London, and on the 24th preached at Shoreham, without molestation. The next day he met with and stopt a travelling preacher, "who," he says, "had crept in among our helpers, without either *discretion* or *veracity*." We may well suppose, that such instances as this did not frequently occur at this early period of the work; when the lay-preachers were few in number, no provision made for their subsistence, and their labors and dangers very great. It is not easy to imagine, what motive a preacher could have, in going out to travel under these circumstances, but a desire of doing good.

About this time Mr. Charles Perronet attached himself to Mr. Wesley, and attended him as a companion, both in England and Ireland, the whole of this year. On the 4th of May they left London, and the next day arrived in Bristol. On the 9th, Mr. Wesley observes, "My name-sake and charge was taken ill of a fever, which soon appeared to be the smallpox. On the 12th I administered the sacrament to my patient, who grows worse and worse. May 19, expecting the turn of the distemper, I sat up with Charles: the Lord is pleased to try our faith and patience yet further."—On the 23d, he was out of danger.

Mr. Wesley continued his labors in Bristol, London, and the places adjacent, till August the 24th, when he set out for Ireland with Mr. Charles Perronet, being strongly importuned by his brother, Mr. John Wesley, to come and supply his place in Dublin. On the 27th, they reached Mr. Phillips's, in Wales, and his brother not being come from Ireland, according to appointment, they concluded he was detained by contrary winds, and had an opportunity of refreshing themselves and their weary beasts. On the 28th, he observes, "Mr. Gwynne came to see me, with two of his family. My soul seemed

pleased to take acquaintance with them. We rode to Maismynis church, where I preached, and Mr. Williams, after me, in Welsh. I preached a fourth time (the same day) at Garth. The whole family received us as the messengers of God; and if such we are, they received him that sent us."

August 29. Mr. John Wesley arrived from Ireland, and came to them at Garth.* On the 30th, Mr. Charles Wesley preached on a tomb-stone in Builth church-yard; and again in the afternoon: in the evening he preached at Garth, on the marks of the Messias, from Matthew xi. 5.—September 2, he observes, "I took horse with Mr. Phillips, Mr. Gwynne, and a brother from Anglesea, as a guide, and found the seven miles to Radnor four good hours' ride. I preached in the church, and labored to awaken the dead, and to lift up the hands that hung down. The minister seemed a man of a simple heart, and surely not eager for preferment, or he would not be content with his salary of three pounds a year." September 3, their friends left them: on the 4th, early in the morning, they set out for Holyhead, which place they reached the next day at seven in the morning, having travelled on horseback twenty-five hours. Sunday, September 6, he sent an offer of his assistance to the minister, who was ready to beat the messenger. He preached, however, at the request of some gentlemen, who behaved with great propriety. September the 9th. they reached Dublin in safety.

Dublin had long been remarkable for a bad police. Frequent robberies, and sometimes murder, were committed in the streets at an early hour in the evening with impunity. The Ormond and Liberty mob, as they were called, would sometimes meet, and fight till one or more persons were killed. It was said the mob had beat a constable to death in the street, and hung the body up in triumph, without any of them being brought to punishment for the murder. There was no vigor in the magistrates, and their power was despised. It is no wonder that the Methodists, at their first coming, were roughly handled in such a place as this: but it is wonderful that they so soon got a firm footing, and passed through their sufferings with so little injury. On Mr. Wesley's arrival here, he observes, "the first news we heard was, that the little flock stands fast in the storm of persecution, which arose as soon as my brother left them. The Popish mob broke open their room, and destroyed all before them. Some of them are sent to Newgate, others bailed. What will be the event we know not, till we see whether the Grand Jury will find the bill." He afterwards informs us that the Grand Jury threw out the bill, and thus gave up the Methodists to the fury of a licentious Popish mob. He says, "God has called me to suffer affliction with his people. I began my ministry with, 'Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people,' &c. September

* This accords with Mr. John Wesley's printed Journal.

10, I met the society, and the Lord knit our hearts together in love stronger than death. We both wept and rejoiced for the consolation. God hath sent me, I trust, to confirm these souls, and to keep them together in the present distress."

Mr. Wesley spent no time in idleness. He was daily employed in preaching, expounding, visiting the people and praying with them. September 20, after commending their cause to God, he went forth to the Green adjoining to the barracks, believing the Lord would make bare his arm in their defence. He called in his Master's name and words, "Come unto me all ye that are weary," &c. The number of hearers was very great, and a religious awe kept down all opposition. He spoke with great freedom to the poor Papists, and, like St. Paul at Athens, quoted their own authors to convince them, particularly Kempis and their Liturgy. None lifted up his voice or hands to oppose; all listened with strange attention, and many were in tears. He advised them to go to their respective places of worship: they expressed general satisfaction, especially the Papists, who now maintained that he was a good Catholic.

The two following instances, together with others of a similar kind which have already been brought forward, may show the liberality of his sentiments towards other denominations of Christians, who did not unite with him, or with the Methodists. "September 25, I past the evening very agreeably at a Baptist's; a woman of sense and piety, and a great admirer of my father's Life of Christ. September 28, had an hour's conference with two serious Quakers, who hold the head with us, and build on the one foundation."

At this early period of the work, when the societies were in their infancy, the two brothers, and the lay-preachers, suffered great inconveniences at the places where they lodged, even in large towns; and we may suppose that both their accommodations and provisions were worse in country societies. The rooms, also, where they assembled when they could not preach in the open air, began to be much too small for the number of people who attended. This being the present state of things in Dublin, Mr. Charles Wesley purchased a house near the place called Dolphin's Barn. The whole ground floor was 42 feet long, and 24 broad. This was to be turned into a preaching-house, and the preachers were to be accommodated in the rooms over it; but before he completed the purchase, he wrote to his brother for his opinion on the matter. His letter is dated October 9; in which he says, one advantage of the house was, that they could go to it immediately; and then adds, "I must go there, or to some other lodgings, or take my flight; for here I can stay no longer. A family of squalling children, a landlady just ready to lie in, a maid who has no time to do the least thing for us, are some of our conveniences.*

* He seems to mean, these are some of the best things in our present accommodations.

Our two rooms for four people (six when J. Healy, and Haughton, come) allow no opportunity for retirement. Charles and I groan for elbow-room in our press-bed: our diet answerable to our lodgings: no one to mend our clothes and stockings; no money to buy more. I marvel that we have stood our ground so long in these lamentable circumstances. It is well I could not *foresee*, while on your side of the water." October 17, he observes, "I passed the day at the house we have purchased, near Dolphin's Barn, in writing and meditation. I could almost have set up my rest here: but I must not look for rest on this side eternity."

Mr. Wesley continued his labors in Dublin, till February 9, 1748, when he took an excursion into the country. His brother, Mr. John Wesley, had spent fourteen or fifteen days in Dublin, the preceding August, and then returned to England, without visiting any of the country places. There were, however, a few preachers in Ireland, who had already introduced the gospel into several country towns. Mr. Wesley came to Tyrrel's Pass, where he soon met a large and well disposed congregation. "Few such feasts," says he, "have I had since I left England; it refreshed my body more than meat or drink. God has begun a great work here. The people of Tyrrel's Pass were wicked to a proverb: swearers, drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, thieves, &c. from time immemorial. But now the scene is changed; not an oath is heard, nor a drunkard seen among them; *aperto vivitur horto.* They are turned from darkness to light, and near one hundred are joined in society."

February 11, Mr. Wesley, J. Healy, and five others set out for Athlone, where, it is probable, notice had been given of their coming. On the road some persons overtook them, running in great haste, and one horseman riding full speed. It soon appeared that the Papists had laid a plan to do them some violent mischief, if not to murder them, at the instigation of their priest, father Terril, who had sounded the alarm the Sunday before. They spoke of their designs with so much freedom, that a report of them reached Athlone, and a party of dragoons being quartered there, were ordered out to meet Mr. Wesley and his friends on the road, and conduct them safe to the town. But of this they were ignorant; and being earlier than was expected, the Papists were not assembled in full force, nor did the dragoons meet them at that distance from the town which was intended. They rode on, suspecting nothing, till within about half a mile of Athlone, when, rising up a hill, several persons appeared at the top of it, and bid them turn back. "We thought them in jest," says Mr. Wesley, "till the stones flew," one of which knocked J. Healy off his horse, and laid him senseless on the ground; and it was with great difficulty the Papists were hindered from murdering nim. The number of these barbarians were soon greatly increased, and though the Protestants began to rise upon them, they kept their

ground till the dragoons appeared, when they immediately fled. Mr. Wesley and his little company, their wounded friend having recovered his senses, were now conducted in safety to Athlone, where the soldiers flocked about them with great affection, and the whole town expressed the greatest indignation at the treatment they had met with. J. Healy was put under the care of a surgeon, and at length recovered of his wounds.

February 15, Mr. Wesley returned to Dublin, and continued his labors with great success, the society being greatly increased, and many testifying publicly, that they had received the knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins, under his word. March 8, his brother, Mr. John Wesley, arrived from England, which gave him a release from his present situation. He did not, however, leave Dublin till the 20th, when he entered the packet-boat at two o'clock in the afternoon, and by three the next day reached Holyhead, from whence he wrote to his brother as follows:

"Teneo te Italiam!
Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum—

"In twenty-five hours exactly, as before, the Lord brought us hither. To describe our voyage were *renovare dolorem.* But here we are after all, God be praised, even God that heareth the prayer. Thanks, in the second place, to our praying brethren. The Lord return it into their bosom. But let them pray on for us, and we for them. And I pray the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to send down his blessing and his spirit on all you who are now assembled together, and hear this read. Peace be unto you, even the peace that passeth all understanding. Look for it every moment! receive it this—and go in peace to that heavenly country, whither we are hastening to meet you!"

Intending to visit Mr. Gwynne's family at Garth in Wales, he took horse the next morning, and by three in the afternoon came to Baldon-Ferry. Here he observes, "We overfilled the small old boat, so that *Gemuit sub pondere Cymba sutilis, et multam accepit rimosa paludem.*" * The wind being strong, and the waves high, in the middle of the channel his young horse took fright, and they had a very narrow escape from being overset. But a gracious Providence attended him; he came safe to land, and on the 25th in the evening reached Garth; but great fatigue, bad weather, and continued pain, had so weakened him, that when he came into the house, he fell down totally exhausted.

Mr. Wesley had already conceived a great regard for Mr. Gwynne's family, and particularly for Miss Sarah Gwynne. A kind of embryo-intention of making proposals of marriage, had dwelt in his mind for

* The frail patched vessel groaned under the weight, and, being leaky, took in plenty of water.

some time. He had mentioned it to his brother in Dublin, who neither opposed nor encouraged him in the matter. During his present stay at Garth, his embryo-intention ripened into more fixed resolution; but still he thought it necessary to take the advice of his friends. After he had been a short time in London, he went to Shoreham, and opened all his heart to Mr. Perronet, who advised him to wait. Much prayer was made, and every prudential step was taken which his friends could suggest; and here the business rested for the present.

August 13, Mr. Wesley arrived again in Dublin, and on the 17th set out on horseback for Cork, which he reached on the 20th, notwithstanding the incessant rains, the badness of the roads, and wretched accommodations at the inns. The next day, being Sunday, he went out to the Marsh at five in the morning, and found a congregation of some thousand persons. He preached from, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, &c." They devoured every word with an eagerness beyond description. "Much good," he says, "has already been done in this place; outward wickedness has disappeared, and outward religion succeeded it. Swearing is seldom heard in the streets, and churches and altars are crowded, to the astonishment of our adversaries. Yet *some* of our clergy, and all the Catholic priests take wretched pains to hinder their people from hearing us.

"At five in the evening, I took the field again, and such a sight I have rarely seen. Thousands and thousands had been waiting some hours; Protestants and Papists, high and low. The Lord endued my soul, and body also, with much strength to enforce the faithful saying, 'That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.' I cried after them for an hour, to the utmost extent of my voice, yet without hoarseness or weariness. The Lord, I believe, hath much people in this city. Two hundred are already joined in a society. At present we pass through honor and good report. The chief persons of the town favor us: no wonder, then, that the common people are quiet. We pass and repass the streets, pursued only by their blessings. The same favorable inclination is all round the country: wherever we go, they receive us as angels of God. Were this to last, I would escape for my life to America."

"I designed to have met about two hundred persons who have given me their names for the society; but such multitudes thronged into the house, as occasioned great confusion. I perceived it was impracticable, as yet, to have a regular society. Here is, indeed, an open door; such as was never set before me till now; even at Newcastle the awakening was not so general. The congregation last Sunday was computed to be ten thousand. As yet there is no *open* opposition. The people have had the word two months, and it is not impossible but their love may last two months longer, before any number of them rise to tear us in pieces.

"I met a neighboring justice of the peace, and had much serious conversation with him. He seems to have a great kindness for religion, and determined to use all his interest to promote it. For an hour and a half I continued to call the poor blind beggars to Jesus. They begin to cry after him on every side; and we must expect to be rebuked for it. Waited on the bishop at Rivers Town, and was received with great affability by himself and family. After dinner rode back to Cork, and drank tea with some well disposed Quakers, and borrowed a volume of their dying sayings. A standing testimony that the life and power of God was with them at the beginning; as it might be again, were they humble enough to confess their want of it." How amiable is the candor of Mr. Wesley, when contrasted with the bigotry of others, who in their great zeal for ceremonies, have contended that the Friends ought not to be acknowledged as Christians, because they neglect the use of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They do not condemn those who use these ordinances, but they deny the necessity of using them, in order to salvation; and they were evidently led, or rather driven into this opinion at first, by the extravagant manner in which Baptism and the Lord's Supper were at that time spoken of; the people being generally taught that those who had been baptized and afterwards received the sacrament, were true Christians and had a sure title to eternal life. The Friends thought themselves called upon to bear a public testimony against an error of such dangerous consequence, which had a tendency to persuade persons that something merely external could make them Christians, and prepare them for heaven; and they seemed to think, that the most effectual way of bearing this testimony, so as to attract the notice of the public, would be by uniting practice to theory, and totally laying aside the use of these ordinances. Without pretending to give any opinion on their conduct in this respect, we may venture to say, that *one extreme* has a natural tendency to produce another in opposition to it. Mr. Wesley goes on:

"August 27, I had much conversation with Mr. C——, a sensible, pious clergyman; one after my own heart, in his love to our desolate mother. He is clear in the doctrine of faith, and gave a delightful account of the bishop.—Sometimes waiting on great men may do good, or prevent evil. But how dangerous the experiment! how apt to weaken our hands, and betray us into an undue deference, and respect of persons! The Lord send to them by whom he will send: but hide me still in disgrace or obscurity."

August 28. He went out about five miles from Cork, where, says he, "Justice P—— received us, and used all his authority with others to do the same. He sent word to the Romish priest, that if he forbid his people from hearing us, he would shut up his Mass-house. Several of the poor Roman Catholics ventured to come, after the justice had assured them, he would himself take off the curse their

priest had laid upon them. I exhorted all alike to repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ. I hastened back to the marsh; on seeing the multitudes, I thought on those words of Prior, 'Then, of all these whom my dilated eye with labor sees, how few will own the messenger of God when the stream turns!' Now they all received me with inexpressible eagerness. I took occasion to vindicate the Methodists from the foulest slanders: that they rail against the clergy. I enlarged on the respect due to them; prayed particularly for the bishop, and laid it on their consciences to make mention of them (the clergy) in all their prayers.—August 29, I passed an useful hour with Mr. C. He rejoiced that I had preached in his parish last Sunday. If our brethren (the clergy) were like-minded, how might their hands be strengthened by us! But we must have patience, as he observed, till the thing speak for itself; and the mist of prejudice being removed, they see clearly that all our desire is the salvation of souls, and the establishment of the Church of England.

"Sept. 1. I met the infant society for the first time in an old playhouse. Our Lord's presence consecrated the place. I explained the nature of christian fellowship; and God knit our hearts together in the desire of knowing him. I spake with some, who told me they had wronged their neighbors in time past, and now their conscience will not let them rest till they have made restitution. I bid them tell the persons injured, it was this preaching had compelled them to do justice. One poor wretch told me before his wife, that he had lived in drunkenness, adultery, and all the works of the devil for twenty-one years: that he had beat her almost every day of that time, and never had any remorse till he heard us; but now he goes constantly to church, behaves lovingly to his wife, abhors the thing that is evil, especially his old sins. This is one instance out of many."

Sept. 5. He observes that the work now increased rapidly: one and another being frequently justified under the word. "Two," says he, "at the sacrament yesterday: two at the society. One overtook me going to the cathedral, and said, 'I have found something in the preaching, and cannot but think it is forgiveness. All the burden of my sins sunk away from off me, in a moment. I can do nothing but pray and cry Glory be to God. I have such a confidence in his love, as I never knew; I trample all sin and sorrow under my feet.' I bid him watch and pray, and expect greater things than these.—Our old master the world, begins to take it ill, that so many desert and clean escape its pollutions. Innumerable stories are invented to stop the work: or rather are repeated, for they are the same we have heard a thousand times, as well as the primitive Christians."

Sept. 6. He rode to Kinsale, and at noon walked to the market-place. The windows were filled with spectators rather than hearers. Many wild looking people stood with their hats on, in the street; and

the boys were rude and noisy. Some well-dressed women stood behind him and listened. His text was, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and the maimed, and the halt and the blind." "I did," says he, "most earnestly invite them all to the great supper. It was fallow ground, yet the word was not all lost. Several settled into serious attention; others expressed their approbation; a few wept. In the evening the multitude so trod on one another, that it was some time before they could settle to hear. I received a blow with a stone on the side of my head, and called on the person to stand forth, and if I had done him any wrong, to strike me again. This little circumstance increased their attention. I lifted up my voice like a trumpet, and showed the people their transgressions and the way to be saved from them. They received my saying, and spake well of the truth. A sudden change was visible in their behavior afterwards, for God had touched their hearts. Even the Roman Catholics owned, 'None could find fault with what the man said.' A lady of the Romish Church would have me to her house. She assured me the governor of the town, as soon as he heard of my coming, had issued orders that none should disturb me: that a gentleman who offered to insult me, would have been torn in pieces by the Roman Catholics, had he not fled for it: and that the Catholics in general are my firm friends." It is worth observing, that every denomination of Christians in Kinsale, claimed him as their own. He tells us, "The Presbyterians say, I am a Presbyterian; the people who go to Church, that I am a minister of theirs; and the Catholics are sure, I am a good Catholic in my heart." This is good evidence, that he confined himself in his public discourses, to the most essential doctrines of the Christian religion; which undoubtedly ought to be the practice of every itinerant preacher.

Mr. Wesley, in his excursions from Cork, had already visited Bandon once or twice, where the words he spake had considerable effect. On his return at this time from Kinsale, a poor man and his wife from Bandon met him, and pressed him so earnestly to give them another visit, that he could not resist their importunity. He went thither again, September the 12th, and the poor man and his wife soon found him out, and took him to their house in triumph. The neighbors flocked in, and "We had indeed," says Mr. Wesley, "a feast of love. A prodigal came, who had been a monster of wickedness for many years, but is now returned to his Father: so are many of the town, who were wicked to a proverb. In the evening, I invited about four thousand sinners to the great supper. God hath given them the hearing ear. I went to Mrs. Jones's, a widow gentlewoman, who is determined to promote the work of God to the utmost of her power: all in the place seem like-minded, except the clergy! O why should they be the last to bring home their King! It grieved me to

hear the poor encouragement given last Sunday to the crowds that flocked to church; which place some of them had not troubled for years before. We send them to church to hear ourselves railed at, and, what is far worse, the truth of God."

Tuesday, September 13. "We parted with many tears, and mutual blessings. I rode on to Kinsale. Here, also, the minister, Mr. P., instead of rejoicing to see so many publicans in the temple, entertained them with a railing accusation against me, as an impostor, an incendiary, and messenger of satan. Strange justice! that Mr. P. should be voted a friend of the church, and I an enemy, who send hundreds into the church for him to drive them out again. September 16, the power of the Lord was present in the society at Cork; I marvel not that satan hates it: we never meet but some or other is plucked out of his teeth. After a restless night of pain, I rose to confer with those who desired it. A woman insisted that the Lord had spoken peace to her trembling soul at the sacrament. Thomas Warburton asserted, that faith came to him by hearing; and that now he hates all sin with a perfect hatred, and could spend his whole life in prayer. Stephen Williams witnessed, 'Last night I found my heart burdened in your prayer; but I repeated after you till my speech was swallowed up. Then I felt myself, as it were, fainting, falling back, and sinking into destruction; when, on a sudden, I was lifted up, my heart lightened, my burden gone; and I saw all my sins at once so black, so many—but all taken away. I am now afraid of neither death, devil, nor hell. I am happier than I can tell you. I know God has, for Christ's sake, forgiven me.' Two others, in whom I found a real work of grace begun, were Papists, till they heard the gospel, but are now reconciled to the church, even to the invisible church, or communion of saints. A few of these lost sheep we pick up, but seldom speak of it, lest our good Protestants should stir up the Papists to tear us in pieces. At Mr. Rolf's, a pious Dissenter, I heard of the extreme bitterness of his two ministers, who make it their business to go from house to house, to set their people against the truth, threatening all who hear us with excommunication. So far beyond the Papists are these *moderate* men advanced in persecution."—Mr. Wesley now quitted this part of the kingdom, and, visiting several towns in his way back, he came safe to Dublin on the 27th of September.

October 8, he took his passage for England, and the next night landed at Holyhead. He wrote to a friend the following account of the dangers he had escaped. "On Saturday evening at half past eight, I entered that small boat, and were two hours in getting to the vessel. There was not then water to cross the bar; so we took our rest till eleven on Sunday morning. Then God sent us a fair wind, and we sailed smoothly before it five hours and a half. Towards evening the wind freshened upon us, and we had full enough of it.

I was called to account for a bit of cake I had eat in the morning, and thrown into violent exercise. Up or down, in the cabin or on deck, made no difference: yet in the midst of it, I perceived a distinct heavy concern, for I knew not what. It was now pitch dark, and no small tempest lay upon us. The captain had ordered in all the sails. I kept mostly upon deck till half past eight, when, upon inquiry, he told me, he expected to be in the harbor by nine: I answered, we would compound for ten. While we were talking, the mainsail, as I take it, got loose; at the same time the small boat, for want of fastening, fell out of its place. The master called all hands on deck, and thrust me down into the cabin; when, in a minute, we heard a cry above, 'We have lost the mast!' A passenger ran up, and brought us worse news, that it was not the mast, but the poor master himself, whom I had scarcely left, when the boat, as they supposed, struck him and knocked him overboard. From that moment he was seen and heard no more. My soul was bowed before the Lord. I kneeled down, and commended the departing spirit to his mercy in Christ Jesus. I adored his distinguishing goodness. *The one shall be taken, and the other left.* I thought of those lines of Young: 'No warning given! unceremonious death! a sudden rush from life's meridian joys; a plunge opaque beyond conjecture.' The sailors were so confounded they knew not what they did. The decks were strewed with sails; the wind shifting about the compass; we just on the shore, and the vessel driving, where or how they knew not. One of our cabin passengers ran to the helm, and gave orders as captain, till they had righted the ship. But I ascribe it to our invisible Pilot, that we got safe to shore soon after ten. The storm was so high, that we doubted whether any boat would venture to fetch us. At last one answered and came. I thought it safer to lie in the vessel; but one calling, 'Mr. Wesley, you must come,' I followed, and by eleven o'clock found out my old lodgings at Robert Griffiths. October 10, I blessed God that I did not stay in the vessel last night: a more tempestuous one, I do not remember."—He now wrote the following thanksgiving hymn:

All praise to the Lord,
Who rules with a word
The untractable sea,
And limits its rage by his steadfast decree:
Whose providence binds,
Or releases the winds,
And compels them again
At his beck to put on the invisible chain.

Even now he hath heard
Our cry, and appear'd
On the face of the deep,
And commanded the tempest its distance to keep:
His piloting hand
Hath brought us to land,

And no longer distress'd,
We are joyful again in the haven to rest.

O that all men would raise
His tribute of praise,
His goodness declare,
And thankfully sing of his fatherly care!
With rapture approve
His dealings of love,
And the wonders proclaim
Perform'd by the virtue of Jesus's name.

Through Jesus alone
He delivers his own,
And a token doth send
That His love shall direct us, and save to the end:
With joy we embrace
The pledge of his grace,
In a moment outfly
These storms of affliction, and land in the sky.

"At half past nine o'clock, I took horse in a perfect hurricane, and was wet through in less than ten minutes; but I rode on, thankful that I was not at sea. Near five in the afternoon, I entered the boat at Baldon-ferry, with a clergyman and others, who crowded our small crazy vessel. The water was exceedingly rough, our horses frightened, and we looking to be overset every moment. The minister acknowledged he never was in the like danger. We were half drowned in the boat. I sat at the bottom, with him and a woman, who stuck very close to me, so that my being able to swim would not have helped me. But the Lord was my support. I cried out to my brother clergyman, 'Fear not, Christian—the hairs of our head are all numbered.' Our trial lasted near half an hour, when we landed wet and weary in the dark night. The minister was my guide to Carnarvon; and by the way entertained me with the praises of a lay-preacher, he had lately heard and talked with. He could say nothing against his preaching, but heartily wished him ordained. His name, he told me, was Howel Harris. He took me to his own inn, and at last found out who I was, which increased our intimacy." Mr. Wesley pursued his journey to Garth, which place he reached October 13. Here he staid about a week, and, on the 21st, arrived safe in Bristol.

He now confined his labors in the gospel, for some months, to London, Bristol, and the neighboring places, making an occasional excursion to Garth, in Wales. April 9, 1749, he was married by his brother, at Garth, to Miss Sarah Gwynne, a young lady of good sense, piety, and agreeable accomplishments. Mr. John Wesley observes, "It was a solemn day, such as became the dignity of a christian marriage."

CHAPTER VI.

SECTION VI.

STATING SOME FURTHER PARTICULARS CONCERNING MR. CHARLES WESLEY; WITH AN ACCOUNT OF HIS DEATH IN 1788.

Mr. Wesley's Journal now begins to fail us. There is no account of his proceedings, sometimes for months, sometimes for years together. There are, however, a few particulars recorded till the year 1756, which may be useful and entertaining to the reader, and throw some light on the history of Methodism. It does not appear that his marriage either interrupted his labors, or lessened his usefulness. April 29, about three weeks after he was married, he wrote thus to his brother: "I hope this will find you prospering in Ireland. I left Garth yesterday sennight. Mr. Gwynne, with Sally and Betty, accompanied me to Abergavenny. There I left them on Saturday morning, and got hither (Bristol) by one o'clock. Over-riding occasioned a fever—I was *too eager* for the work, and therefore believe, God checked me by that short sickness. Till Wednesday evening at Weaver's Hall, my strength and understanding did not return; but from that time the Lord has been with us of a truth. More zeal, more life, more power, I have not felt for some years (I wish my mentioning this may not lessen it;) so that hitherto marriage has been no hindrance. You will hardly believe it sits so light upon me. Some farther proof I had of my heart on Saturday last, when the fever threatened most. I did not find, so far I can say, any unwillingness to die, on account of any I should leave behind: neither did death appear less desirable than formerly—which I own gave me great pleasure, and made me shed tears of joy. I almost believe, nothing shall hurt me: that the world, the flesh, and the devil, shall keep their distance; or, by assaulting, leave me more than conqueror. On Thursday, I propose setting out for London, by Oxford, with T. Maxfield. If they will give me a year of grace, I shall wonder and thank you. I hope you came time enough to save J. Cownly, &c. Set your time for returning; *when abouts* at least. Will you meet me at Ludlow? It is a thousand pities* you should not be here, when the library makes its first appearance. The Lord cut short your work and his, and make a few weeks go as far as many months! What say you to T. Maxfield and me taking a journey, when you return, through all the societies, northern and western, and

* The phraseology here is rather low, and I am persuaded would not have been used by Mr. Wesley, but in this familiar and careless way of writing to his brother.

settling correspondencies with the stewards, *alias* booksellers. My kindest love to Mr. Lunell, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Fowks, Mr. Gibbons, and all friends at Cork and Dublin. We make mention of you in all our prayers; be not unmindful of us. The Lord preserve us all to his day.

February 8, 1750. He observes there was an earthquake in London. This place he reached on the 1st of March, and on the 8th wrote thus to his brother. "This morning, a quarter after five, we had another shock of an earthquake, far more violent than that of February 8. I was just repeating my text, when it shook the Foundery so violently, that we all expected it to fall on our heads. A great cry followed from the women and children. I immediately cried out, 'Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved and the hills be carried into the midst of the sea: for the Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.' He filled my heart with faith, and my mouth with words, shaking their souls as well as their bodies. The earth moved westward, then east, then westward again, through all London and Westminster. It was a strong and jarring motion, attended with a rumbling noise like that of thunder. Many houses were much shaken, and some chimneys thrown down, but without any further hurt."

March 10. He expounded the 24th chapter of Isaiah; a chapter, he tells us, which he had not taken much notice of, till this awful providence explained it. April 4, he says, "Fear filled our chapel, occasioned by a prophecy of the return of the earthquake this night. I preached my written sermon on the subject, with great effect, and gave out several suitable hymns. It was a glorious night for the disciples of Jesus. April 5, I rose at four o'clock after a night of sound sleep, while my neighbors watched. I sent an account to M. G. as follows:—The late earthquake has found me work. Yesterday I saw the Westminster end of the town full of coaches, and crowds flying out of the reach of Divine Justice, with astonishing precipitation. Their panic was caused by a poor madman's prophecy. Last night they were all to be swallowed up. The vulgar were in almost as great consternation as their betters. Most of them watched all night; multitudes in the fields and open places; several in their coaches: many removed their goods. London looked like a sacked city. A lady just stepping into her coach to escape, dropped down dead. Many came all night knocking at the Foundery door, and begging admittance for God's sake."—These, however, were not Methodists, but others, who, under the general apprehension of danger, thought there was more safety under the roof of religious persons than elsewhere. A plain proof that those who neglect religion, and perhaps despise the professors of it, while in health, and free from apparent danger: yet when great and public calamities approach them, even in apprehension, they plainly discover that they think the state of

religious persons better than their own. Mr. Wesley's account of the great confusion in London, on the 4th of April, is confirmed by a letter of Mr. W. Briggs, to Mr. John Wesley, dated on the 5th of the same month, in which he says, "This great city has been, for some days past, under terrible apprehensions of another earthquake. Yesterday thousands fled out of town, it having been confidently asserted by a dragoon, that he had a revelation, that a great part of London, and Westminster, especially, would be destroyed by an earthquake the 4th instant, between twelve and one at night. The whole city was under direful apprehensions. Places of worship were crowded with frightened sinners, especially our two chapels, and the Tabernacle, where Mr. Whitefield preached. Several of the classes came to their leaders, and desired, that they would spend the night with them in prayer; which was done, and God gave them a blessing. Indeed all around was awful! Being not at all convinced of the prophet's mission, and having no call from any of my brethren, I went to bed at my usual time, believing I was safe in the hands of Christ: and likewise, that by doing so, I should be the more ready to rise to the preaching in the morning—which we both did; praised be our kind Protector." In a postscript he adds, "Though crowds left the town on Wednesday night, yet crowds were left behind; multitudes of whom, for fear of being suddenly overwhelmed, left their houses, and repaired to the fields, and open places in the city. Tower Hill, Moorfields, but above all Hyde Park, were filled best part of the night, with men, women, and children, lamenting. Some, with stronger imaginations than others, mostly women, ran crying in the streets An earthquake! an earthquake! Such a distress, perhaps, is not recorded to have happened before in this careless city. Mr. Whitefield preached at midnight in Hyde Park. Surely God will visit this city; it will be a time of mercy to some. O may I be found watching!"

Mr. Wesley proceeds with his Journal.—April 15, "I met with Mr. Salmon's Foreigner's Companion through the universities of Cambridge and Oxford, printed in 1748, and made the following extract from page 25. 'The times of the day the university go to this church, are ten in the morning, and two in the afternoon, on Sundays and holidays; the sermon usually lasting about half an hour. But when I happened to be at Oxford, in 1742, Mr. W. the Methodist, at Christ Church, entertained his audience two hours; and having insulted and abused all degrees, from the highest to the lowest, was in a manner hissed out of the pulpit by the lads.' And high time for them to do so, if the historian said true; but, unfortunately for him, I measured the time by my watch, and it was within the hour. I abused neither high nor low, as my sermon, in print, will prove: neither was I hissed out of the pulpit, or treated with the least incivility, either by young or old. What then shall I say to my old high-church friend,

whom I once so much admired? I must rank him among the apocryphal writers; such as the judicious Dr. Mather, the wary Bishop Burnet, and the most modest Mr. Oldmixton."

The censure here passed on Oldmixton I think is just. He appears to me to be a bold, dashing, impertinent writer. His prejudice is so great, that his assertions, as an historian, deserve no credit, unless supported by authentic documents. I think far otherwise of Dr. Mather, and Bishop Burnet. It is indeed true, that Burnet's History of his own Time, is written with great caution; but this surely does not deserve censure, but commendation. The truth seems to be, that Burnet was a man of great moderation; on which account, the zealots, both of the high and low church party, became his inveterate enemies. For the satisfaction of the reader, I shall give a short account both of Dr. Mather * and of Bishop Burnet.†

* Dr. Cotton Mather, an eminent American divine, was born at Boston, in New England, in 1663. He became minister of Boston in 1684, and spent his life in the discharge of his office, and in promoting several excellent societies for the public good, particularly one for suppressing disorders, one for reforming manners, and a society of peace-makers, whose professed business it was to compose differences, and prevent lawsuits. His reputation was not confined to his own country; for in 1710, the university of Glasgow sent a diploma for the degree of doctor in divinity; and, in 1714, the Royal Society of London chose him one of their Fellows. He died in 1728. His chief work was, Magnalia Christi Americana, or an Ecclesiastical History of New England, from its first planting in 1620, to 1698, in folio.

† Gilbert Burnet, was born at Edinburgh in 1643, of an ancient family in the shire of Aberdeen. His father being bred to the study of the law, was, at the restoration, appointed one of the Lords of Session, with the title of Lord Grimond. Our author, the youngest son of his father, was sent to continue his studies at Aberdeen, at ten years of age, and was admitted M. A. before he was fourteen. His own inclination led him to the study of the civil and feudal law; and he used to say, that it was from this study he had received more just notions of civil society and government, than those which divines maintain. About a year after, he began to apply himself to the study of divinity, and was admitted preacher before he was eighteen. Sir Alex. Burnet, his cousin-german, offered him a benefice, but he refused to accept of it. In 1663, he came to England, and spent a short time at Oxford and Cambridge. In 1664, he made a tour through Holland and France. At Amsterdam, by the help of a Jewish Rabbi, he perfected himself in the Hebrew language; and likewise became acquainted with the leading men of the different persuasions tolerated in that country; as Calvinists, Arminians, Lutherans, Anabaptists, Brownists, Papists, and Unitarians; amongst each of which he used frequently to declare, he met with men of such unfeigned piety and virtue, that he became fixed in a strong principle of universal charity, and an invincible abhorrence of all severities on account of religious dissensions.

Upon his return from his travels, he was admitted minister of Salton, in which station he served five years in the most exemplary manner. He drew up a memorial, in which he took notice of the principal errors in the Scots Bishops, and sent a copy of it to several of them, which exposed him to their resentments. Being engaged in drawing up the "Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton," Duke Lauderdale invited him to London, and introduced him to King Charles II. After his return to Scotland, he married Lady Margaret Kennedy, daughter of the Earl of Cassilis, a lady of piety and good understanding, and strongly inclined to the Presbyterians. The day before their marriage, he delivered the lady a deed, renouncing all pretensions to her fortune, which was considerable, and which must have fallen into his hands, she having no intention to secure it.

Burnet's intimacy with the Dukes of Hamilton and Lauderdale, occasioned him to be frequently sent for by the King and the Duke of York, who had conversations with him in

"June 22. I met," says he, "a daughter of my worthy old friend Mr. Erskine, at the Foundery: she was deeply wounded by the sword of the spirit: confessed she had turned many to Deism, and feared there could be no mercy for her.—July 18, I had the satisfaction of bringing back to Mr. Erskine his formerly disobedient daughter. She fell at his feet: it was a moving interview—all wept—our Heavenly Father heard our prayers."—December 2. Being in Wales, he observes, "I encouraged a poor girl to seek a cure from him who hath wounded her. She has the outward mark, too; being daily threatened to be turned out of doors by her master, a great swearer and strict churchman, a constant communicant and habitual drunkard."

1751. James Wheatley was at this time a preacher among the Methodists, and a dabbler in physic. Some very heavy complaints were brought against him, for improper conduct to several women, of which Mr. John Wesley has given a pretty full statement in his printed Journal for the year 1751, which account is fully confirmed by Mr. Charles Wesley's private Journal, now before me. They brought Wheatley and his accusers face to face, and the charges were so clearly proved, that he was obliged to confess the truth. To screen himself as far as possible, he accused others, and said the rest of the preachers were like himself. This was a serious charge. Ten of them were called together to meet Wheatley; and T. Maxfield first, then each of the others, asked him—"What sin can you charge me with?"—Wheatley was silent; which convinced them that he was

private. But Lauderdale, being offended at the freedom with which Burnet spoke to him, took pains to prejudice the king against him. In 1675, Sir Harbottle Grimstone, master of the Rolls, appointed him preacher of the chapel there, notwithstanding the opposition of the Court. In 1679 and 81, he published his History of the Reformation, for which he had the thanks of both houses of parliament. About this time he became acquainted with the Earl of Rochester, and spent one evening in a week with him, for a whole winter, discoursing on those topics on which skeptics, and men of loose morals, object to the christian religion. The happy effect of these conferences, occasioned his publication of the account of the life and death of that Earl. When the inquiry concerning the Popish plot was on foot, the king consulted him often, and offered him the bishopric of Chichester if he would engage in his interests; but he refused to accept it on these terms.

On the accession of King James to the throne, he obtained leave to go out of the kingdom. He lived in great retirement for some time at Paris, then travelled to Italy and Rome, where he was favorably received by the Pope. He afterwards pursued his travels through Switzerland and Germany, and, in 1688, came to Utrecht, with an intention to settle in some of the Seven Provinces. Here he received an invitation from the Prince and Princess of Orange, to come to the Hague, which he accepted. He was immediately acquainted with all their designs, and entered heartily into them. When the Prince of Orange came over to England, Burnet attended him in quality of chaplain, and was soon advanced to the see of Salisbury. He declared for moderate measures with regard to the clergy who scrupled to take the oaths; and many were displeased with him, for declaring for the toleration of Nonconformists. In 1699, he published his Exposition of the 39 Articles, which occasioned a representation against him in the Lower House of Convocation, in 1701; but he was vindicated by the Upper House. He died in 1715, and was interred in the Church of St. James, Clerkenwell, where he has a monument errected to him. See Encyclopædia Britannica.

guilty of wilful lying. They were now obliged to silence him, and Mr. John Wesley has been censured for using too much severity towards him: but as the facts were clearly proved, he and his brother, for they acted jointly in the matter, could do no less than put him away from the connexion.

Mr. Wesley goes on with his Journal, and observes, that Wheatley's charge put his brother and him upon a resolution of strictly examining into the life and moral behavior of every preacher in the connexion with them; "and the office," says he, "fell upon me."—It certainly could not have fallen into fitter hands. Mr. John Wesley's great weakness was, a proneness to believe every one sincere in his professions of religion, till he had the most positive, and, perhaps, repeated proofs of his insincerity; and to believe their testimonies of things as true, without making proper allowance for their ignorance. This exposed him to frequent imposition and mistake. The case was far otherwise with Mr. Charles: he quickly penetrated into a man's character, and it was not easy to impose upon him. He totally differed from his brother concerning the qualifications necessary for an itinerant preacher, and sometimes silenced a man whom his brother had admitted. The one looked at the possible harm an unqualified preacher might do to many persons; the other, at the possible good he might do to some. This was the real principle which governed the two brothers in their very different conduct towards the lay-preachers; which made some of them represent Mr. Charles as an enemy to them all. But this certainly was far from being the case. Mr. Charles Wesley being clothed with his new office, set out the next morning, June 29, to visit the societies in the midland and northern counties, as far as Newcastle; in which journey Mrs. Wesley accompanied him. I do not find, however, in the whole of his Journal, the least accusation, of a nature similar to that of Wheatley, against any preacher in the connexion. In this journey he was a great blessing to the people wherever he came; many were added to the societies, and the old members were quickened in their zeal and diligence, to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling.—July 21, he observes, "I rode to Birstal (near Leeds) where John Nelson comforted our hearts with his account of the success of the gospel in every place where he has been preaching, except in Scotland. There he has been beating the air for three weeks, and spending his strength in vain. Twice a day he preached at Musselborough to some thousands of mere hearers, without one soul being converted. I preached at one, to a different kind of people. Such a sight have I not seen for many months. They filled the valley and side of the hill as grasshoppers for multitude: yet my voice reached the most distant—God sent the word home to many hearts."—July 25, he was taken ill of a fever, and on the 28th, his fever increasing, he says, "I judged it incumbent on me, to leave my thoughts concerning the work and

the instruments, and began dictating the following letter."—Unfortunately the letter was not transcribed into the Journal, a blank space being left for it: I apprehend it is not now to be found any where.

He goes on. August 3, "I was enabled to ride out, and to confer with the preachers and others.—August 5, I went to the room, that I might hear with my own ears, one (of the preachers) of whom many strange things had been told me. But such a preacher never have I heard before, and hope I never shall again. It was beyond description. I cannot say that he preached false doctrine, or true, or any doctrine at all; but pure unmixed nonsense. Not one sentence did he utter that could do the least good. Now and then a text of Scripture was dragged in by head and shoulders. I could scarcely refrain from stopping him. He set my blood a galloping, and threw me into such a sweat, that I expected the fever to follow. Some begged me to step into the desk and speak a few words to the dissatisfied hearers. I did so, taking no notice of M. F—k, late superintendent of all Ireland! I talked closely with him, utterly averse to working, and told him plainly he should either work with his hands, or preach no more. He complained of my brother; I answered I would repair the supposed injury by setting him up again. At last he yielded to work." The same day he silenced another preacher.

August 12, being at Newcastle, he desired W. Shent, who was with him, to go to Musselborough. Before he set out, he gave Mr. Wesley the following account of a remarkable trial they had lately had at Leeds. "At Whitecoat-Hill, three miles from Leeds, a few weeks since, as our brother Maskew was preaching, a mob arose, broke the windows and doors, and struck the constable Jacob Hawley, one of the society. On this we indicted them for an assault; and the ringleader of the mob, John Hellingworth, indicted our brother the constable, and got persons to swear the constable struck him. The grand jury threw out our indictment, and found theirs against us, so we stood trial with them, on Monday July 15, 1751. The Recorder, Richard Wilson, Esq. gave it in our favor, with the rest of the court. But the foreman of the jury, Matthew Priestley, with two others, Richard Cloudsly, and Jabez Bunnel, would not agree with the rest, being our avowed enemies. The foremen was Mr. Murgatroyd's great friend and champion against the Methodists. However the Recorder gave strict orders to a guard of constables, to watch the jury, that they should have neither meat, drink, candles, or tobacco, till they were agreed in their verdict. They were kept prisoners all that night and the next day till five in the afternoon, when one of the jury said, he would die before he would give it against us. Then he spake closely to the foreman concerning his prejudice against the Methodists, till at last he condescended to refer it to one man. Him the other charged to speak as he would answer it to God in the day of judgment. The man turned pale, and trembled, and desired that

another might decide it. Another, John Hardwick, being called upon, immediately decided it in favor of the Methodists. After the trial, Sir Henry Ibison, one of the justices, called a brother, and said, 'You see God never forsakes a righteous man, take care you never forsake him.'"

Besides Richard Wilson, Esq. Recorder of Leeds, the following justices were present; J. Frith, mayor; Alderman Micklethwait, Alderman Denison, Alderman Sawyer, Alderman Smith, and Alderman Brooks. Sir Henry Ibison was mentioned above. Mr. Wesley left Newcastle, August 24, and on the 26th, reached Thirsk in Yorkshire, where his Journal for the present year ends.

It is evident from the nature of the thing, that he must have met with great difficulties in executing the design of his journey, and have made himself many enemies. But he seldom regarded consequences, when he was convinced that he was doing his duty. His mind, however, was sometimes much burdened. On one occasion, he observes, "Preaching I perceive, is not my principal business. God knoweth my heart and all its burdens. O that he would take the matter into his own hand, though he lay me aside as a broken vessel!"—But he was frequently comforted and strengthened in preaching and praying with the societies. After one of these opportunities he says, "My faith was greatly strengthened for the work. The manner, and the instruments of carrying it on, I leave entirely to God."

July 8, 1754. Mr. Charles Wesley, with his brother, who was indisposed,* Mr. Charles Perronet, and another friend, set out for Norwich. On the 10th, in the evening they reached Lakenham, where they were informed the whole city was in an uproar about James Wheatley, "whose works of darkness," says Mr. Wesley, "are now brought to light; whereby the people are so scandalized and exasperated, that they are ready to rise and tear him in pieces. We do not therefore wonder that the clergy are not forward to show their friendly inclinations to us; yet one has sent us a civil message, excusing his not visiting us till the tumult is over."—The next day the gentleman with whom they lodged at Lakenham dined with the mayor of Norwich, a wise resolute man, who labored for peace. He was employed all day in taking the affidavits of the women whom Wheatley had tried to corrupt; these accounts were printed and cried about the streets, which occasioned great confusion. "What could satan, or his apostles," says Mr. Wesley, "do more, to shut the door against the gospel in this place forever? Yet several came to us, entreating us to preach. The advertisement we had printed here last year, disclaiming Mr. Wheatley, did much good, and, with the blessing of God, helped the people to distinguish. Our host also, has assured the

* See also Mr. John Wesley's printed Journal in his Works, vol. xxix. page 299.

mayor, that Mr. Wheatley is no Methodist, or associate of ours. A letter of Charles Perronet's to Wheatley they have printed there, contrary to our express orders. It is not fit that our hand should be upon him. Fresh discoveries are daily made of his lewdness, enough to make the ears of all who hear to tingle: yet he is quite insensible!" These things are now mentioned, because the notoriety of them at the time appears a sufficient justification of Mr. John Wesley's conduct towards Wheatley.

Sunday, July 14. They walked to Mr. Edwards's in Norwich, and at seven o'clock in the morning Mr. Charles Wesley took the field. He preached on Hog-Hill to about 2000 hearers, his brother standing by him. A drunkard or two were troublesome, but more out of mirth than malice. They afterwards went to church, and the people, both in the streets and at the cathedral, were remarkably civil. He adds, "The lessons, Psalms, Epistles, and Gospel, were very encouraging. The anthem made our hearts rejoice: 'O pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companion's sake will I now say, peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God, will I seek thy good.' We received the sacrament at the hands of the bishop. In the afternoon I went to St. Peter's, and at five o'clock to Hog-Hill, where it was computed that ten thousand persons were present. Again I preached repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. They listened with great seriousness—their hearts were plainly touched, as some showed by their tears. Who could have thought the people of Norwich would ever more have borne a field-preacher? It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. To him be all the glory, who saith, 'I will work, and who shall hinder?'"

July 19. Mr. John Wesley left them, and Mr. Charles continued his labors. "At night," he says, "I had multitudes of the great vulgar and the small to hear me, with three justices, and nine clergymen: many, I am persuaded, felt the sharp two-edged sword. Sunday, July 21. My audience at seven in the morning was greatly increased. I dwelt chiefly on those words, 'He hath sent me to preach glad tidings to the meek, or poor;' and labored, as all last week, to bring them to a sense of their wants; and for this end I have preached the law, which is extremely wanted here. The poor sinners have been surfeited with smooth words and flattering invitations. The greater cause have we for wonder and thanksgiving, that they can now endure sound and severe doctrine. I received the sacrament again from his lordship, among a score of communicants. If the gospel prevail in this place, they will by and by find the difference.—July 22, God is providing us a place; an old large brewhouse, which the owner, a justice of peace, has reserved for us. He has refused several, always declaring he would let it to none but Mr. John Wesley. Last Satur-

day Mr. Edwards agreed, in my brother's name, to take a lease for seven years; and this morning Mr. S. has sent his workmen to begin to put it into repair. The people are much pleased at our having it: so are not satan and his Antinomian apostles."

July 27. He was informed of the death of a person whom he considered and loved as a son in the gospel, but whose unsteadiness had given him great pain. His observations on the occasion show, that he had a mind susceptible of the finest sentiments of friendship. "Just now," says he, "I hear from *Leeds*, that my poor rebellious son has taken his flight. But God healed his backslidings first, and he is at rest! My poor J. H—n is at rest in the bosom of his Heavenly Father. O what a turn has it given my heart! what a mixture of passions do I feel here! But joy and thankfulness are uppermost. I opened the book of consolation, and cast my eye upon a word which shall wipe away all tears: 'I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death.'—Sunday, July 28, I met our little society, or rather candidates for a society, at five in the morning. At seven, I preached Christ Jesus, the Saviour of all men, to a numerous quiet congregation, and afterwards heard the bishop preach, and received the sacrament from him. At five in the evening, after prayer for an open door, I went forth to such a multitude as we have not seen before in Norwich. During the hymn, a pale trembling opposer labored to interrupt the work of God, and draw off the people's attention: but as soon as I began to read the history of the prodigal son, his commission ended, and he left me to a quiet audience. Now the door was opened indeed. For an hour and a half I showed their sins and wanderings from God, and invited them back to their Father's house. And surely he had compassion on them, inclining many hearts to return. God, I plainly found, had delivered them into my hand. He filled my mouth with persuasive words, and my heart with strong desires for their salvation. I concluded, and began again, testifying my good will towards them, which was the sole end of my coming. But if I henceforth see them no more, yet is my labor with my God. They have heard words whereby they may be saved; and many of them, I cannot doubt, will be our crown of rejoicing in the great day. Several serious persons followed me to Mr. Edwards's, desiring to be admitted into our society. I told them, as others before, to come among us first for some time, and see how they liked it. We spent some time together in conference, praise, and prayer. I am in no haste for a society: first let us see how the candidates live." —Had this cautious and prudent conduct been observed, through every part of the Methodist discipline, the preachers and members of the societies, would not indeed have been so numerous as at present, but they would have had a degree of excellence, they have not yet attained.

Mr. Wesley goes on. July 30, "I preached at five, and found the

people's hearts opened for the word. The more satan rages, the more our Lord will own and bless us. A poor rebel at the conclusion lifted up his voice; for whom I first prayed, and then turning full upon him, preached repentance and Christ to his heart. I desired him to turn his face towards me, but he could not. However he felt the invisible chain, which held him to hear the offers of grace and salvation. I have great hope that satan has lost his slave; some assured me they saw him depart in tears. July 31, I expounded Isaiah xxxii. 1, to my constant hearers, who seem more and more to know their wants. At night, I laid the axe to the root, and showed their actual and original corruption, from Rev. iii. 17. 'Thou sayest, I am rich, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.' The strong man was disturbed in his palace, and roared on every side. My strength increased with the opposition. A gentleman on horseback, with others, was ready to gnash upon me with his teeth, but my voice prevailed, and they retreated to their strong hold, the alehouse. There, with difficulty, they procured some butchers to appear in their quarrel; but they had no commission to approach till I had done. Then, in the last hymn, they made up to the table with great fury. The foremost often lifted up his stick to strike me, being within his reach; but he was not permitted. I staid to pray for them, and walked quietly to my lodgings. Poor Rabshakeh muttered something about the Bishop of Exeter; but did not accept of my invitation to Mr. Edwards's. The concern and love of the people were much increased, by my supposed danger. We joined together in prayer and thanksgiving as usual; and I slept in peace."

Mr. Wesley's Journal gives us no further information of his labors, or of any of his proceedings, till the latter end of the year 1756. The number of lay-preachers was now greatly increased; and though very few of them had enjoyed the benefits of a learned, or even a good education in the common branches of knowledge, yet there were among them men of strong sense, and great powers of mind, who soon became useful and able preachers of the gospel. We may naturally suppose, that these, conscious of their abilities and usefulness, would begin to feel some uneasiness under the very humble character of a Methodist preacher, which the public at that time held in great contempt. This seems to have been actually the case; for they wished to promote a plan, which no doubt they hoped might both be useful to the people, and give them a greater degree of respectability in the public opinion. To accomplish this purpose, they were desirous that the preachers, or some of them at least, should have some kind of ordination, and be allowed to administer the ordinances to the people, through all the societies. Both Mr. John and Charles Wesley opposed this attempt, as a total dereliction of the avowed principles on which the societies were first united together. When they became itinerant preachers, and began to form societies, they utterly disclaimed

any intention of making a separate party in the nation: they never intended that the societies should be separate churches: the members were constantly exhorted to attend their respective places of worship, whether the Established Church, or a Dissenting meeting; and the times of preaching on the Lord's day were purposely fixed, to give them liberty so to do. They had no intention to separate any from their former church-membership, but to awaken persons of all denominations to a serious sense of religion; to call them back to their first principles, to be helpers of their faith, and to stir them up to work out their salvation with fear and trembling! Their leading object was, to bring persons of all persuasions to an experimental and practical knowledge of the fundamental truths of the Christian religion; to unite them together in brotherly love, while each retained his former religious connexion and his peculiar opinions on church government and modes of worship. It is evident that the Methodist societies were formed on these broad and disinterested principles, however narrow-minded and interested men may have misconstrued them, or endeavored to pervert them. It was, indeed, a new thing in the world; but the two brothers were fully persuaded that this was the peculiar calling of the Methodists. They had been gradually led into this plan, under a concurrence of circumstances which appeared to them providential, and many years' experience of its extensive usefulness, had confirmed them in this opinion. To separate the people, therefore, from their former connexions, and unite them into an independent body, they thought was departing from their proper calling, and quitting the station which God had appointed them for the benefit of the nation. This subject has often been discussed, but the question has never been fairly stated. It is not merely, whether the Methodists shall separate from the Church of England? but whether they shall separate from the Church, and from every denomination of Dissenters hitherto known in the kingdom, and become a body, distinct and independent of both. Thus far, they have been a kind of middle link, uniting the Dissenters, and members of the Church, in the interests of experimental religion, and in christian love and charity to one another. A separation therefore, will make the breach wider than ever: it will overturn the original constitution of Methodism, and totally subvert the very spirit of it. This in my opinion will be of serious consequence, not only to the Methodists themselves, but to the nation at large.*

The contagion, however, had gone forth: the plague was begun: a division in the society of *Leeds*, had already taken place, and the minds of many in different societies were greatly unsettled, by a few

* This subject is here incidentally mentioned, as it gave rise to Mr. Charles Wesley's journey through many of the societies this year. It will be considered more at length, in the latter part of the life of Mr. John Wesley.

of the preachers. Mr. Charles Wesley was much affected with these proceedings. He considered the present attempts to separate those of the people from the Church, who had belonged to her, and the Dissenters among them from their former connexions, as a partial evil only: but he looked forward to the consequences, which would probably follow, when none were left to oppose them. While under these painful exercises of mind, the words of the Lord by the prophet, often gave him comfort: "I will bring the third part through the fire." He often preached from these words in the journey we are going to describe; and would often mention them to his friends in conversation, even to the close of his life. He seemed to expect, that when he and his brother were removed hence, troubles would arise in the societies; but that, after various struggles, a third part would be found to adhere to their *original calling*, and to the original simplicity of the Methodists.

September 17. He left Bristol, and visited the societies in Gloucestershire and Staffordshire, every where confirming the brethren in the truths of the gospel, and in their peculiar calling as Methodists. On the 22d, he came to Nottingham, and spent the afternoon in taking down the names of those in the society, and conversing with them. He adds, "We rejoiced to meet once more, after so long a separation. My subject both at night and in the morning, was, "I will bring the third part through the fire." It was a time of solemn rejoicing. There had been, twelve months ago, a great revival and increase of the society; but satan was beginning again to sow his tares. My coming at this season, I trust, will be the means of preventing a division." The next day he came to Sheffield. "Here also," he says, "I delivered my own soul, and the people seemed awakened and alarmed. I spake plainly and lovingly to the society, of continuing in the Church: and though many of them were Dissenters and predestinarians, none were offended." It is probable they understood his meaning, and then there was no just cause of offence. By advising those who belonged to the Church, to continue in it, he advised the Dissenters to continue in their respective meetings, or churches. His object was, to dissuade the members of the Methodist societies from leaving their former connexions, and uniting into a separate body. In doing this he sometimes mentioned the Dissenters, as well as the members of the Church of England, but not always, as in most places these formed the bulk of the Methodist societies.

Passing through Huntslet, the Rev. Mr. Crook, minister of the place, stopped him and took him to his house. Here he met with Dr. Cockburn, his old school-fellow and friend, who had waited for him near a week, to take him to York. Mr. Wesley spent a delightful hour in conversation with them, full of life and zeal, and simplicity, and then went on to Leeds. Sunday, September 26, he preached at seven in the morning, then walked to Huntslet, and preached

twice for Mr. Crook; in the evening he returned to Leeds, and preached a fourth time to a very crowded audience. In the society, he observes, "I could speak of nothing but love, for I felt nothing else. Great was our rejoicing over each other. Satan, I believe, has done his worst, and will get no further advantage by exasperating their spirits against their departed brethren. They were unanimous to stay in the Church, because the Lord stays in it, and multiplies his witnesses therein. Monday the 27th, I breakfasted with Miss N., who was not so evil-affected towards her forsaken brethren as I expected. Nothing can ever bring such as her back, but the charity which hopeth all things, beareth all things, endureth all things.—I went to the Church-prayers, with several who have been long dealt with to forsake them utterly. They will stand the firmer, I hope, for their shaking."

September 28. "I set out with Dr. Cockburn, for York, and preached from Hab. iii. 2. 'O Lord, revive thy work.' The crowd made our room excessively hot: but that did not hinder their attention.—Our preacher stationed here, had quite left off preaching in the morning. Many told me, I could not get a congregation at five o'clock: but I found it otherwise. The room was almost full, while I explained, 'Being made free from sin, and become the servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.' I insisted largely on the necessity of laboring after holiness. The hearers appeared much stirred up.—I spent the day (September 29) in conferring with all comers. The doctor's house was open to all, and his heart also: his whole desire being to spread the gospel."

October 1. He met with a Miss T. earnestly seeking salvation; who had been awakened by reading Theron and Aspasio, written by Mr. Hervey.—While at York, Mr. Wesley's time was fully occupied; not merely with preaching night and morning, and conversing with the members of the society: but in attending persons of learning and character, who were desirous of his company, to state their objections to the doctrines and economy of the Methodists, and to hear his answers. This day he spent an hour with Mr. D. and answered his candid objections. He had also an opportunity of defending his old friend Mr. Ingham. "It is hard," says he, "that a man should be hanged for his looks; for the appearance of M——nism. Their spirit and practices, he has as utterly renounced as we have: their manner and phrase cannot so soon be shaken off."—Simplicity and goodness constantly met with his approbation: under whatever dress or form he saw them, they attracted his notice and ensured his friendship. He found Mercy Bell here, and these amiable qualities shone so bright through the little singularities of her profession, that he had sweet fellowship with her. He adds, "I marvel not that the Friends, so fallen from their first simplicity, cannot receive her testimony."—Thus speaks Mr. Wesley of a woman, who was a public

teacher among the Friends. Many similar instances occur in his life, which plainly show that his love of truth and goodness, always broke through his high-church prejudices, and united his heart, in christian fellowship, to the wise and good of every communion.

October 2. The whole day was spent in singing, conference, and prayer. "I attended," says he, "the quire-service. The people there were marvellously civil, and obliged me with the anthem I desired, Hab. iii., a feast for a king, as Queen Anne called it. The Rev. Mr. Williamson walked with me to his house, in the face of the sun. I would have spared him, but he was quite above fear. A pious sensible Dissenter cleaved to us all day, and accompanied us to the preaching. I discoursed on my favorite subject, 'I will bring the third part through the fire.' We glorified God in the fire, and rejoiced in hope of coming forth as gold. Sunday, October 3. From five till near eight in the morning I talked closely with each of the society: then, at Mr. Williamson's request, I preached on the Ordinances from Isaiah lxiv. 5. 'In those is continuance and we shall be saved. I dwelt longest on what had been most neglected, family prayer, public prayer, and the sacrament. The Lord set to his seal, and confirmed the word with a double blessing.—I received the sacrament at the minster. They were obliged to consecrate twice, the congregation being doubled and trebled through my exhortation and example. Glory be to God alone.—I went to Mr. Williamson's church, who read prayers as one who felt them, and then beckoned me. I stepped up into the pulpit, when no one expected it, and cried to a full audience, 'The kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel.' They were all attention. The word did not return void, but accomplished that for which it was sent. Neither is he that planted, any thing, neither is he that watereth."

October 5. Being returned to Leeds, he conversed with one of the preachers who seemed desirous of making a separation; and adds, "I threw away some words on one, who is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can render a reason."—The next day, he again conversed with the same preacher, who frankly confessed, if any of the societies should desire him to take charge of them as a distinct body, he should not refuse them. Mr. Wesley told him plainly, that the ground of all such designs was pride: but his words were spoken into the air.—He now set out for Seacroft, and rode on to Aberford, to see his old friend Mr. Ingham, who was absent, laboring in his Lord's vineyard. "I had the happiness," says he, "of finding lady Margaret at home, and their son Ignatius. She informed me that Mr. Ingham's circuit takes in about four hundred miles; that he has six fellow-laborers, and a thousand persons in his societes, most of them converted. I rejoiced in his success. Ignatius would hardly be satisfied at my not preaching. We passed an hour and a half profitably, and got safe back to Seacroft before night. Soon after,

our dearest brother Grimshaw found us, and brought a blessing with him. I preached from Luke xxi. 34, 'Take heed to yourselves,' &c., and further enforced our Lord's warning on the society.—Our hearts were comforted and knit together.—October 8, we had another blessed hour with them, before we left this lively people. I continued till one o'clock, in conference with my worthy friend and fellow-laborer, Mr. Grimshaw; a man after my own heart; whose love of the church, flows from his love of Christ. With such, may my lot be cast in both worlds.

"I rode with my faithful brother Grimshaw to Bramley, and preached to a multitude of serious souls, who eagerly received our Lord's saying, 'Look up, and lift up your heads,' &c. They seemed broad awake, when I called again in the morning, October 2, 'Watch ye therefore, and pray always,' &c. Their spirit quickened mine. We had sweet fellowship together. I have no doubt but they will be counted worthy to escape, and to stand before the Son of man.—Returning to Leeds, I met my brother Whitefield, and was much refreshed by the account of his abundant labors. I waited on him to our room, and gladly sat under his word.—October 10. From Isaiah lxiv. 5, I earnestly pressed the duties of constant communicating, of hearing, reading, preaching the word; of fasting, of private, family, and public prayer. The spirit of love and union was in the midst of us.—I came to Birstal before noon. My congregation was a thousand or two less, through George Whitefield's preaching to-day at Haworth. Between four and five thousand were left to receive my warning from Luke xxi. 34. After church service, we met again: every soul seemed to hang on the word. Two such precious opportunities, I have not enjoyed this many a day. It was the old time revived; a weighty spirit rested on the congregation, and they stood like men prepared to meet the Lord."

October 11. Mr. Whitefield, and Mr. Grimshaw, were present at a watch-night at Leeds. Mr. Wesley preached first, and Mr. Whitefield after him. It was a time of great solemnity, and of great rejoicing in hope of the glorious appearing of the great God.—He now left Leeds, but continued preaching in the neighboring places a few days. At Birstal, he makes the following observation: "The word was clothed with power, both to awaken and to confirm. My principal concern is for the disciples, that their houses may be built on the rock, before the rains descend. I hear in most places, the effect of the word; but I hearken after it, less than formerly, and take little notice of those, who say they receive comfort, or faith, or forgiveness. Let their fruits show it."

October 17. He came to Mr. Grimshaw's, at Haworth, and was greatly refreshed with the simplicity and zeal of the people. Here a young preacher in Mr. Ingham's connexion came to spend the evening with him. "I found great love for him," says Mr. Wesley,

"and wished all our sons in the gospel, were equally modest and discreet."—He was now more fully informed of the state of the people in several societies: that, having been prejudiced against the Church of England, by some of the preachers, their minds had been unsettled, and rendered dissatisfied with the Methodist economy. These were easily induced to leave the society, and unite themselves to some independent body: seldom with advantage, but often with loss. He talked largely with Mr. Grimshaw, how to remedy the evil. "We agreed," says he, "1. That nothing can save the Methodists from falling a prey to every seducer, but close walking with God, in all the commandments and ordinances; especially reading the word, and prayer, private, family, and public. 2. That the preachers should be allowed more time in every place, to visit from house to house, after Mr. Baxter's manner. 3. That a small treatise should be written, to ground them in their calling, and preserve them against seducers; and be lodged in every family."

He now set out for Lancashire, accompanied by his zealous friend Mr. Grimshaw. They reached Manchester on the 20th. They found the society in a low divided state, and reduced nearly one half. "I make more allowance," says Mr. Wesley, "for this poor shattered society, because they have been neglected, if not abused, by our preachers. The leaders desired me not to let J. T. come among them again, for he did them more harm than good, by talking in his witty way against the Church and clergy. As for poor J. H. he could not advise them to go to church, because he never went himself. But some informed me, that he advised them not to go. I talked with the leaders, and earnestly pressed them to set an example to the flock, by walking in all the commandments and ordinances. I wrote my thoughts to my brother, as follows. 'Mr. Walker's letter* deserves to be seriously considered. One only thing occurs to me now, which might prevent in a great measure the mischiefs which will probably ensue after our death: and that is, greater, much greater deliberation and care in admitting preachers. Consider seriously, if we have not been too easy and too hasty in this matter. Let us pray God to show us, if this has not been the principal cause, why so many of our preachers have lamentably miscarried. Ought any new preacher to be received before we know that he is grounded, not only in the doctrines we teach, but in the discipline also, and particularly in the communion of the Church of England? If we do not insist on that ϛοργη † for our desolate mother, as a prerequisite, yet should we not be well assured that the candidate is no enemy to the Church? I met the society in calm love, and exhorted them to stand fast in one mind

* Several letters passed between Mr. John Wesley, and the Rev. Mr. Walker, of Truro, about this time. They are published in the Arminian Magazine.

† Natural affection; such as parents have for their children, or children for their parents.

and one spirit; in the old paths, or ways of God's appointing. Henceforth they will not believe every spirit. The Lord stablish their hearts with grace."

October 23. He breakfasted with Mr. Richard Barlow, whose uniform conduct, for a great many years, has done honor to the Methodist society, and to religion in general. "I rejoiced," says Mr. Wesley, "in the remembrance of his blessed sister, now in glory. For seven years, she adorned the gospel in all things."—He afterwards took horse with Mr. Philips for Hafield. The next day, Sunday the 24th, he preached in the church, which was better filled than had ever been known in a morning; and in the evening was exceedingly crowded. He makes a short observation here, that shows his attachment to the Church of England, in a much stronger light than anything which another person could say of him. "I tasted the good word," says he, "while reading it. Indeed the scripture comes with double weight to me in a church. If any pity me for my bigotry, I pity them for their blind prejudice, which robs them of so many blessings."

October 24. He returned to Manchester, and makes the following observations on Mr. Whitefield's candor and liberality. "Here I rejoiced to hear of the great good Mr. Whitefield has done in our societies. He preached as *universally* as my brother. He warned them every where against apostasy, and insisted on the necessity of holiness after justification. He beat down the separating spirit, highly commending the prayers and services of our church; charged our people to meet their bands and classes constantly, and never to leave the Methodists, or God would leave them. In a word, he did his utmost to strengthen our hands; and he deserves the thanks of all the churches for his abundant labor of love."

October 29, he wrote to Mr. Grimshaw as follows: "I could not leave this shattered society so soon as I proposed. They have not had fair play from our treacherous sons in the gospel, but have been scattered by them as sheep upon the mountains. I have once more persuaded them to go to church and sacrament, and stay to carry them thither the next Lord's day.—Nothing but grace can keep our children, after our departure, from running into a thousand sects, a thousand errors. Grace, exercised, kept up and increased in the use of all the means; especially family and public prayer and the sacrament, will keep them steady. Let us labor, while we continue here, to ground and build them up in the Scriptures, and in all the ordinances. Teach them to handle well the sword of the spirit, and the shield of faith. Should I live to see you again, I trust you will assure me, there is not a member of all your societies but reads the Scriptures daily, uses private prayer, joins in family and public worship, and communicates constantly. 'In those is continuance, and we shall be saved.'"

"To my beloved Brethren at Leeds, &c.

"Grace and peace be multiplied! I thank my God on your behalf, for the grace which is given unto you, by which ye stand fast in one mind and in one spirit. My Master, I am persuaded, sent me to you at this time to confirm your souls in the present truth—in your calling, in the old paths of gospel ordinances. O that ye may be a pattern to the flock for your unanimity and love. O that ye may continue steadfast in the word, and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers (private, family, and public,) till we all meet around the great white throne!—I knew beforehand, that the Sanballats, and Tobiahs, would be grieved when they heard there was a man come to seek the good of the Church of England. I expected they would pervert my words, as if I should say, 'The church could save you.' So indeed you and they thought, till I and my brethren taught you better; and sent you in and through all the means to Jesus Christ. But let not their slanders move you. Continue in the old ship. Jesus hath a favor for our church, and is wonderfully visiting and reviving his work in her. It shall be shortly said, 'Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her.' Blessed be God you see your calling. Let nothing hinder you from going constantly to church and sacrament. Read the Scriptures daily in your families, and let there be a church in every house. The word is able to build you up, and if ye watch and pray always, ye shall be counted worthy to stand before the Son of man. Watch ye therefore, stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men, be strong: let all your things be done in love. I rejoice in hope of presenting you all in that day. Look up, for your eternal salvation draweth near.

"I examined more of the society. Most of them have known the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. October 30, I dined with my candid friend and censor, Dr. Byrom. I stood close to Mr. Clayton in church, as all the week past, but not a look would he cast towards me,

'So stiff was his parochial pride,'

and so faithfully did he keep his covenant with his eyes, not to look upon an old friend, when called a Methodist.—October 31, I spake with the rest of the classes. I refused tickets to J. and E. R. all the rest were willing to follow my advice, and go to church and sacrament. The Dissenters I sent to their respective meetings." These extracts from Mr. Charles Wesley's Journal for the present year, show, in the clearest light, that he had a just view of the peculiar calling of the Methodists, and that he was exceedingly anxious they should abide in it. He was fully convinced, that all attempts to form the people into an independent body, originated in the pride and selfishness of some of the preachers, and would be injurious to the progress of the work. He saw, however, that, under various pretences,

the preachers would finally prevail, and obtain their purpose, though not during the life of his brother. He was still comforted with the hope, that whenever such an event should take place, there would be found, perhaps, a third part of the people in the societies who would have judgment and virtue enough left to withstand it, and continue a connexion on the original plan. How far his expectations will be realized, time must discover.

November 1, Mr. Wesley left Manchester, and on the 6th came safe to his friends at Bristol. This, I believe, was the last journey he ever took through any considerable part of the kingdom. He afterwards divided his labors chiefly between London and Bristol, and continued to preach till within a short time of his death. Many conjectures have been made concerning the reasons which induced him to desist from travelling, and from taking the same active part in the government of the societies which before he had done. Not a few have attributed his conduct, in this respect, to a loss of zeal, and true vital religion; and I confess that I was once of that opinion; but I have since been more perfectly informed, and better acquainted with the nature of his situation. The following circumstances will throw some light on this matter. 1. His determined opposition against all attempts to unite the members of the Methodist societies into an independent body, made the leading preachers, who wished it, his enemies. 2. His avowed opinion, that many preachers were admitted into the connexion, as itinerants, who were not qualified for that station, united all of this description with the former, and both together endeavored to persuade the people that Mr. Charles Wesley was an enemy to all the lay-preachers, and no friend to Methodism itself: nor were persons wanting, who whispered these things into the ears of Mr. John Wesley, to prejudice his mind against his brother. Mr. Charles being fully aware of all this, and wishing to avoid a low and illiberal opposition, and especially occasions of frequent difference with his brother, thought it best to retire from a situation in which all his words and actions were artfully misconstrued and misrepresented, and from having any share in the government of the societies, which he saw, or thought he saw, was approaching towards a system of human policy, that in the end could not be carried on without sometimes having recourse to the arts of misrepresentation and deception. These he abhorred in all persons, but when practised under the mask of religion, they always appeared to him more detestable.

He still continued, however, firmly attached to the Methodists, and labored by every means which his situation would permit, to avert the evils he feared, and to promote the good of the societies. He never lost sight of any attempts to detach the people from their former connexions, and unite them into an independent body, and uniformly opposed them with all the influence he had. In 1758, he

published his testimony on this subject in the following words: "I think myself bound in duty, to add my testimony to my brother's. His twelve reasons against our ever separating from the Church of England, are mine also. I subscribe to them with all my heart. Only with regard to the first, I am quite clear, that it is neither expedient nor LAWFUL for *me* to separate. And I never had the least inclination or temptation so to do. My affection for the church is as strong as ever: and I clearly see my CALLING; which is to live and to die in her communion. This therefore I am determined to do, the Lord being my helper."

In 1786, after Mr. John Wesley had been prevailed upon to ordain some of the preachers, he republished the same testimony, and in other ways showed the most marked disapprobation of his brother's conduct. Yet he still continued to preach in the societies as usual, and to correspond with his brother; not only on matters relating to the new ordination among the Methodists, but on other subjects. In a letter to his brother, dated April 9, 1787, he observes, "I served West Street Chapel on Friday and yesterday. Next Saturday I propose to sleep in your bed. S. B. and I shall not disagree.

"Stand to your own proposal: 'Let us agree to differ.' I leave America and Scotland to your latest thoughts and recognitions: only observing now that you are exactly right: 'He did nothing before he asked me.' True, he asked your leave to ordain two more preachers, before he ordained them: but while your answer was coming to prohibit him, he took care to ordain them both. Therefore, his asking you was a mere compliment. This I should not mention, but out of concern for your authority. Keep it while you live; and, after your death, *detur digniori*—or rather, *dignioribus*.*—You cannot settle the succession: you cannot divine how God will settle it. Have the people of —— given you leave to die E. A. P. J.?"†

In this letter, speaking of genius, he observes, "I never knew a genius that came to good. What can be the reason? Are they as premature in evil as in good; or do their superior talents overset them? Must every man of a superior understanding lean to, and trust and pride himself in it?—I never envied a man of great parts: I never wished a friend of mine possessed of them.

"Poor J. H.! What has genius done for him? ruined his fortune, and ruined his body. Last night I heard he was dying of a putrid fever. We prayed for him at the table: but I know not whether he is alive or dead. His sickness was sent to prepare him either for

* Let it be given to one more worthy; or rather, in the plural, to those who are more worthy of it. He speaks ironically of these worthies, who aimed at the supreme power in the societies, over the head of his brother.

† *Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ Presbyter Johannes.* John, Presbyter of the Church of England. This signature, I believe, Mr. John Wesley sometimes used in the early part of life, when writing to his brother.

Paradise, or for orders. Such a messenger may perhaps take Samuel or Charles, from the evil. I never sought great things for them; or greater for myself, than that I may escape to land—on a broken piece of the ship. It is my daily and hourly prayer, that I may escape safe to land—and that an entrance may be ministered to you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ."

Mr. Charles Wesley had a weak body, and a poor state of health, during the greatest part of his life. I believe he laid the foundation of both, at Oxford, by too close application to study, and abstinence from food. He rode much on horseback, which probably contributed to lengthen out life to a good old age. I visited him several times in his last sickness, and his body was indeed reduced to the most extreme state of weakness. He possessed that state of mind which he had been always pleased to see in others—unaffected humility, and holy resignation to the will of God. He had no transports of joy, but solid hope and unshaken confidence in Christ, which kept his mind in perfect peace. A few days before his death he composed the following lines. Having been silent and quiet for some time, he called Mrs. Wesley to him, and bid her write as he dictated;

"In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a sinful worm redeem?
Jesus, my only hope thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart;
O! could I catch a smile from thee,
And drop into eternity!"

He died March 29, 1788, aged seventy-nine years and three months; and was buried, April 5, in Marybone church-yard, at his own desire. The pall was supported by eight clergymen of the Church of England. On his tomb-stone are the following lines, written by himself on the death of one of his friends: they could not be more aptly applied to any person, than to Mr. Charles Wesley.

"With poverty of spirit bless'd,
Rest, happy saint, in Jesus rest;
A sinner sav'd, through grace forgiv'n,
Redeem'd from earth to reign in heav'n!
Thy labors of unwearied love,
By thee forgot, are crown'd above;
Crown'd, through the mercy of thy Lord,
With a free, full, immense reward!"

Mr. Wesley was of a warm and lively disposition; of great frankness and integrity, and generous and steady in his friendships. His love of simplicity, and utter abhorrence of hypocrisy, and even of affectation in the professors of religion, made him sometimes appear severe on those who assumed a consequence, on account of their experience, or, were pert and forward in talking of themselves and others. These persons were sure of meeting with a reproof from him,

which some, perhaps, might call precipitate and imprudent, though it was evidently founded on a knowledge of the human heart. In conversation he was pleasing, instructive, and cheerful; and his observations were often seasoned with wit and humor. His religion was genuine and unaffected. As a minister, he was familiarly acquainted with every part of divinity; and his mind was furnished with an uncommon knowledge of the Scriptures. His discourses from the pulpit were not dry and systematic, but flowed from the present views and feelings of his own mind. He had a remarkable talent of expressing the most important truths with simplicity and energy; and his discourses were sometimes truly apostolic, forcing conviction on the hearers in spite of the most determined opposition. As a husband, a father, and a friend, his character was amiable. Mrs. Wesley brought him five children, of whom two sons and a daughter are still living. The sons discovered a taste for music, and a fine musical ear, at an early period of infancy, which excited general amazement; and are now justly admired by the best judges for their talents in that pleasing art.

From a review of the life of Mr. Charles Wesley, as delineated in the preceding sheets, it will appear evident, that the Methodists are greatly indebted to him for his unwearied labors and great usefulness at the first formation of the societies, when every step was attended with difficulty and danger.* And being dead he yet speaketh, by his numerous and excellent hymns, written for the use of the societies, which still continue to be the means of daily edification and comfort to thousands. It has been proposed to publish a volume of sermons, selected from his manuscripts, for the benefit of his widow: if this should be done, it is hoped the Methodists will show their gratitude to his memory, and that they are not unworthy of the benefits they have received from him.

His lively turn of thought did not leave him in his old age, as the following lines will testify.

THE MAN OF FASHION.

Written in 1784.

What is a modern man of fashion?
A man of taste and dissipation:
A busy man, without employment,
A happy man, without enjoyment.
Who squanders all his time and treasures,
On empty joys, and tasteless pleasures;
Visits, attendance, and attention,
And courtly arts, too low to mention.

In sleep, and dress, and sport and play,
He throws his worthless life away;

* The labors of the Methodist preachers at present, are mere amusement, compared with his fatigues and dangers.

Has no opinion of his own,
But takes from leading beaux the ton;
With a disdainful smile or frown,
He on the rif-raf crowd looks down;
The world polite, his friends and he,
And all the rest are —— Nobody!

Taught by the great his smiles to sell,
And how to write, and how to spell;
The great his oracles he makes,
Copies their vices and mistakes;
Custom pursues, his only rule,
And lives an ape, and dies a fool!

Had Mr. Charles Wesley engaged in the higher walks of verse, there is no doubt but he would have been esteemed a considerable poet, even by those who now despise his hymns. He chose the most excellent way—the writing of hymns for the instruction and edification of the many, rather than devote all his life in attempts to please the fancy of the few. Some of his hymns are certainly among the best pieces in that species of composition. The following hymn has, through mistake, been attributed to his brother.

Written after a Riot.

"Ye simple souls that stray
Far from the path of peace,
(That unfrequented way
To life and happiness;)
How long will ye your folly love,
And throng the downward road,
And hate the wisdom from above,
And mock the sons of God?

Madness and misery
Ye count our life beneath;
And nothing great can see,
Or glorious in our death:
As born to suffer and to grieve,
Beneath your feet we lie,
And utterly contemn'd we live,
And unlamented die.

Poor pensive sojourners,
O'erwhelm'd with griefs and woes,
Perplex'd with needless fears,
And pleasure's mortal foes;
More irksome than a gaping tomb
Our sight ye cannot bear,
Wrapt in the melancholy gloom
Of fanciful despair.

So wretched and obscure,
The men whom you despise,
So foolish, weak, and poor,
Above your scorn we rise:
Our conscience in the Holy Ghost,
Can witness better things;

For he whose blood is all our boast,
Hath made us priests and kings.

Riches unsearchable
In Jesus' love we know,
And pleasures from the well
Of life, our souls o'erflow;
From him the spirit we receive,
Of wisdom, grace, and power;
And alway sorrowful we live,
Rejoicing evermore.

Angels our servants are,
And keep in all our ways,
And in their hands they bear
The sacred sons of grace:
Our guardians to that heavenly bliss,
They all our steps attend,
And God himself our Father is,
And Jesus is our Friend.

With him we walk in white,
We in his image shine,
Our robes are robes of light,
Our righteousness divine;
On all the grov'ling kings of earth
With pity we look down,
And claim, in virtue of our birth,
A never-fading crown."

Mr. Charles Wesley wrote short hymns on the most important passages in the Old and New Testament. In these he has expressed his opinion, on the leading doctrines of the gospel, with energy and beauty.

"*The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard-seed.*" Matt. xiii. 31.

"A *grain* of grace may we not see
This moment, and the next a tree?
Or *must* we patiently attend,
To find the precious seed ascend?
Our Lord declares it *must* be so;
And striking deep our root, we grow,
And lower sink, and higher rise,
Till Christ transplant us to the skies."

The following comment on a much disputed passage shows his humanity and benevolence.

"*To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me.*" 1 Sam. xxviii. 19.

"What do these solemn words portend?
A gleam of hope when life shall end:
'Thou and thy sons, though slain, shall be
To-morrow in repose with me!'
Not in a state of hellish pain,
If Saul with Samuel doth remain,
Not in a state of damn'd despair,
If loving Jonathan be there."

THE

LIFE OF THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

BOOK SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

GIVING SOME ACCOUNT OF MR. JOHN WESLEY, FROM HIS BIRTH TO THE YEAR 1729.

When we view Mr. Wesley rising into public notice, from the bosom of a family which had long been venerable for christian knowledge and piety, the mind feels a degree of prepossession in his favor, and our expectation is raised of something great and good from him. As we proceed to examine his education, and the principles instilled into his mind, at an early period of life, we shall see a solid foundation laid of sound knowledge and genuine piety. But that every one may judge for himself in this matter, I shall endeavor to trace, step by step, the circumstances of his early life, during the period mentioned in this chapter.

He was the second son of Samuel and Susannah Wesley, and born at Epworth in Lincolnshire, on the 17th of June, 1703, O. S. There has indeed been some variation in the accounts given of his age by different persons of the family; but the certificate of it, sent him by his father a little before he was ordained priest, to satisfy the bishop of his age, puts the matter beyond a doubt. The original lies before me, and the following is a faithful copy.

"*Epworth, August* 23, 1728.

"John Wesley, M. A. Fellow of Lincoln College, was twenty-five years old the 17th of June last, having been baptized a few hours after his birth, by me,

"Samuel Wesley, Rector of Epworth."

When he was nearly six years old, a calamity happened which threatened the whole family with destruction, and him in particular; his parents for a short time believing, that he was actually consuming in the flames of their house. But his mother's letter to the Rev. Mr.

Hoole, will be the best account of this matter. It is dated August 24, 1709, and is as follows.

"Rev. Sir,—My master is much concerned that he was so unhappy as to miss of seeing you at Epworth; and he is not a little troubled that the great hurry of business about building his house will not afford him leisure to write. He has therefore ordered me to satisfy your desire as well as I can, which I shall do by a simple relation of matters of fact, though I cannot at this distance of time recollect every calamitous circumstance that attended our strange reverse of fortune. On Wednesday night, February the 9th, between the hours of eleven and twelve, our house took fire, by what accident God only knows. It was discovered by some sparks falling from the roof upon a bed where one of the children (Hetty) lay, and burnt her feet. She immediately ran to our chamber and called us; but I believe no one heard her, for Mr. Wesley was alarmed by a cry of fire in the street, upon which he rose, little imagining that his own house was on fire; but on opening his door, he found it was full of smoke, and that the roof was already burnt through. He immediately came to my room (as I was very ill he lay in a separate room from me) and bid me and my two eldest daughters rise quickly and shift for our lives, the house being all on fire. Then he ran and burst open the nursery door, and called to the maid to bring out the children. The two little ones lay in the bed with her; the three others in another bed. She snatched up the youngest, and bid the rest follow, which they did, except Jackey. When we were got into the hall, and saw ourselves surrounded with flames, and that the roof was on the point of falling, we considered ourselves inevitably lost, as Mr. Wesley in his fright had forgot the keys of the doors above stairs. But he ventured up stairs once more, and recovered them, a minute before the stair-case took fire. When we opened the street door, the strong north-east wind drove the flames in with such violence, that none could stand against them: Mr. Wesley, only, had such presence of mind as to think of the garden-door, out of which he helped some of the children; the rest got through the windows. I was not in a condition to climb up to the windows: nor could I get to the garden door. I endeavored three times to force my passage through the street door, but was as often beat back by the fury of the flames. In this distress I besought our blessed Saviour to preserve me, if it were his will, from that death, and then waded through the fire, naked as I was, which did me no farther harm than a little scorching my hands and face.

"While Mr. Wesley was carrying the children into the garden, he heard the child in the nursery cry out miserably for help, which extremely affected him; but his affliction was much increased, when he had several times attempted the stairs then on fire, and found they would not bear his weight. Finding it was impossible to get near

him, he gave him up for lost, and kneeling down, he commended his soul to God, and left him, as he thought, perishing in the flames. But the boy seeing none come to his help, and being frightened, the chamber and bed being on fire, he climbed up to the casement, where he was soon perceived by the men in the yard, who immediately got up and pulled him out, just in the article of time that the roof fell in, and beat the chamber to the ground. Thus, by the infinite mercy of Almighty God, our lives were all preserved by little less than a miracle, for there passed but a few minutes between the first alarm of fire, and the falling of the house."

Mr. John Wesley's account of what happened to himself, varies a little from this relation given by his mother. "I believe," says he, "it was just at that time (when they thought they heard him cry) I waked: for I did not cry, as they imagined, unless it was afterwards. I remember all the circumstances as distinctly as though it were but yesterday. Seeing the room was very light, I called to the maid to take me up. But none answering, I put my head out of the curtains, and saw streaks of fire on the top of the room. I got up and ran to the door, but could get no further, all the floor beyond it being in a blaze. I then climbed upon a chest which stood near the window: one in the yard saw me, and proposed running to fetch a ladder. Another answered, 'there will not be time: but I have thought of another expedient. Here I will fix myself against the wall: lift a light man, and set him on my shoulders.' They did so, and he took me out of the window. Just then the roof fell; but it fell inward, or we had all been crushed at once. When they brought me into the house where my father was, he cried out, 'Come, neighbors! let us kneel down! let us give thanks to God! He has given me all my eight children: let the house go, I am rich enough!'"

"The next day, as he was walking in the garden, and surveying the ruins of the house, he picked up part of a leaf of his Polyglot Bible, on which just those words were legible. '*Vade; vende omnia quæ habes, et attolle crucem, et sequere me.* Go; sell all that thou hast; and take up thy cross and follow me.'"*

The peculiar danger and wonderful escape of this child, excited a good deal of attention and inquiry at the time, especially among the friends and relations of the family. His brother Samuel, being then at Westminster, writes to his mother on this occasion in the following words, complaining that they did not inform him of the particulars. "I have not heard a word from the country, since the first letter you sent me after the fire. I am quite ashamed to go to any of my relations. They ask me whether my father means to leave Epworth? whether he is building his house? whether he has lost all his books and papers? if nothing was saved? what was the lost child, a boy or a girl? what was its name? &c. To all which I am forced

* See Arminian Magazine, vol. i. page 32.

to answer, I cannot tell; I do not know; I have not heard—I have asked my father some of these questions, but am still an ignoramus."

All the children received the first rudiments of learning from their mother, who, as we have seen, was admirably qualified for this office in her own family. I can find no evidence that the boys were ever put to any school in the country, their mother having a very bad opinion of the common methods of instructing and governing children. But she was not only attentive to their progress in learning, she likewise endeavored to give them, as early as possible, just and useful notions of religion. Her mind seems to have been led to a more than ordinary attention to Mr. Wesley in this respect. In one of her private meditations, when he was near eight years old, she mentions him, in a manner that shows how much her heart was engaged in forming his mind for religion. I shall transcribe the whole meditation for the benefit of the reader.

"*Evening*, *May* 17, 1711. Son John.

"What shall I render to the Lord for all his mercies? The little unworthy praise that I can offer, is so mean and contemptible an offering, that I am even ashamed to tender it. But, Lord, accept it for the sake of Christ, and pardon the deficiency of the sacrifice.

"I would offer thee myself, and all that thou hast given me; and I would resolve, O give me grace to do it, that the residue of my life shall be all devoted to thy service. And I do intend to be more *particularly* careful of the soul of this child, that thou hast so mercifully provided for, than ever I have been; that I may do my endeavor to instil into his mind the principles of thy true religion, and virtue. Lord give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success."

Her good endeavors were not without the desired effect; for I believe it was about this time, being eight years old, that he began to receive the sacrament.

In the month of April, 1712, he had the smallpox, together with four others of the children. His father was then in London, to whom his mother writes thus: "Jack has bore his disease bravely, like a man, and indeed like a Christian, without any complaint; though he seemed angry at the smallpox when they were sore, as we guessed by his looking sourly at them, for he never said any thing." In 1714, he was placed at the Charter-house, and became distinguished for his diligence and progress in learning; so that, in 1719, when his father was hesitating in what situation he should place Charles, his brother Samuel writes thus of him: "My brother Jack, I can faithfully assure you, gives you no manner of discouragement from breeding your third son a scholar." Two or three months afterwards he mentions him again, in a letter to his father: "Jack is with me, and a brave boy, learning Hebrew as fast as he can."

He was now sixteen, and the next year was elected to Christ Church, Oxford. Here he pursued his studies with great advantage, I believe under the direction of Dr. Wigan, a gentleman eminent for his classical knowledge. Mr. Wesley's natural temper in his youth was gay and sprightly, with a turn for wit and humor. When he was about twenty-one years of age, "he appeared, as Mr. Badcock has observed, the very sensible and acute collegian—a young fellow of the finest classical taste, of the most liberal and manly sentiments."* His perfect knowledge of the *classics* gave a smooth polish to his wit, and an air of superior elegance to all his compositions. He had already begun to amuse himself occasionally with writing verses, though most of his poetical pieces at this period, were, I believe, either imitations or translations of the Latin. Some time in this year, however, he wrote an imitation of the 65th Psalm, which he sent to his father, who says, "I like your verses on the 65th Psalm, and would not have you bury your talent."

In the summer of this year, his brother, Mr. Samuel Wesley, broke his leg, and when he was recovering, wrote to Mr. John Wesley at Oxford, informing him of his misfortune, and requesting some verses from him. Mr. Wesley's answer is dated the 17th of June, when he was just twenty-one years of age. The letter shows his lively and pleasant manner of writing when young; and the verses afford a specimen of his poetical abilities to give a beautiful and elegant dress, to verses intended as ridicule.

"I believe," says he, "I need not use many arguments to show I am sorry for your misfortune, though at the same time I am glad, you are in a fair way of recovery. If I had heard of it from any one else, I might probably have pleased you with some impertinent consolations; but the way of your relating it is a sufficient proof, that they are what you don't stand in need of. And indeed, if I understand you rightly, you have more reason to thank God that you did not break both, than to repine because you have broke one leg. You have undoubtedly heard the story of the Dutch seaman, who having broke one of his legs by a fall from the main-mast, instead of condoling himself, thanked God that he had not broke his neck. I scarce know whether your first news vexed me, or your last news pleased me more: but I can assure you, that though I did not cry for grief at the former, I did for joy at the latter part of your letter. The two things which I most wished for of almost any thing in the world, were to see my mother, and Westminster once again, and to see them both together was so far above my expectations, that I almost looked upon it as next to an impossibility. I have been so very frequently disappointed when I had set my heart on any pleasure, that I will never again depend on any before it comes. However, I shall be obliged to

*Westminster Magazine.

you if you will tell me, as near as you can, how soon my uncle is expected in England,* and my mother in London."

"Since you have a mind to see some of my verses, I have sent you some, which employed me above an hour yesterday in the afternoon. There is one, and I am afraid but one good thing in them, that is, they are short.

From the Latin.

"As o'er fair Cloe's rosy cheek,
Careless a little vagrant pass'd,
With artful hand around his neck
A slender chain the virgin cast.

As Juno near her throne above,
Her spangled bird delights to see;
As Venus has her fav'rite dove,
Cloe shall have her fav'rite flea.

Pleas'd at his chains, with nimble steps
He o'er her snowy bosom stray'd:
Now on her panting breast he leaps,
Now hides between his little head.

Leaving at length his old abode,
He found, by thirst or fortune led,
Her swelling lips that brighter glow'd
Than roses in their native bed.

Cloe, your artful bands undo,
Nor for your captive's safety fear;
No artful bands are needful now
To keep the willing vagrant here.

Whil'st on that heav'n 't is giv'n to stay,
(Who would not wish to be so blest,)
No force can draw him once away,
Till death shall seize his desin'd breast."

Towards the close of this year, Mr. Wesley began to think of entering into deacon's orders; and this led him to reflect on the importance of the ministerial office, the motives of entering into it, and the necessary qualifications for it. On examining the step he intended to take, through all its consequences to himself and others, it appeared of the greatest magnitude, and made so deep an impression on his mind, that he became more serious than usual, and applied himself with more attention to subjects of divinity. Some doubts arising in his mind on the motives which ought to influence a man in taking holy orders, he proposed them to his father, with a frankness that does great credit to the integrity of his heart. His father's answer is dated

* The uncle here mentioned was his mother's only brother. He was in the service of the East-India Company, and the public prints having stated that he was returning home in one of the Company's ships, Mrs. Wesley came to London when the ship arrived, to meet him. But the information was false, and she disappointed. *Private Papers.*

the 26th of January, 1725. "As to what you mention of entering into holy orders, it is indeed a great work, and I am pleased to find you think it so. As to the motives you take notice of, my thoughts are; if it is no harm to desire getting into that office, even as Eli's sons, *to eat a piece of bread;* yet certainly a desire and intention to lead a stricter life, and a belief that one should do so, is a better reason; though this should, by all means, be begun before, or ten to one it will deceive us afterwards. But if a man be unwilling and undesirous to enter into orders, it is easy to guess whether he can say so much as, with common honesty, that he trusts he is 'moved to it by the Holy Ghost.' But the principal spring and motive, to which all the former should be only secondary, must certainly be the glory of God, and the service of his Church in the edification of our neighbor. And woe to him who, with any meaner leading view, attempts so sacred a work." He then mentions the qualifications necessary for holy orders, and answers a question which his son asked. "You ask me which is the best commentary on the Bible? I answer, the Bible itself. For the several paraphrases and translations of it in the Polyglot, compared with the original, and with one another, are, in my opinion, to an honest, devout, industrious, and humble man, infinitely preferable to any comment I ever saw. But Grotius is the best, for the most part, especially on the Old Testament." He then hints to his son, that he thought it too soon for him to take orders; and encourages him to work and write while he could. "You see," says he, "time has shaken me by the hand; and death is but a little behind him. My eyes and heart are now almost all I have left; and I bless God for them."

His mother wrote to him in February on the same subject, and seemed desirous that he should enter into orders as soon as possible. "I think," says she, "the sooner you are a deacon the better, because it may be an inducement to greater application in the study of practical divinity, which of all other studies I humbly conceive to be the best for candidates for orders." His mother was remarkable for taking every opportunity to impress a serious sense of religion on the minds of her children; and she was too watchful to let the present occasion slip without improvement. "The alteration of your temper," says she, in the same letter, "has occasioned me much speculation. I, who am apt to be sanguine, hope it may proceed from the operations of God's Holy Spirit, that, by taking off your relish for earthly enjoyments, he may prepare and dispose your mind for a more serious and close application to things of a more sublime and spiritual nature. If it be so, happy are you if you cherish those dispositions; and now, in good earnest, resolve to make religion the business of your life; for, after all, that is the one thing that, strictly speaking, is necessary: all things beside are comparatively little to the purposes of life. I

heartily wish you would now enter upon a strict examination of yourself, that you may know whether you have a reasonable hope of salvation by Jesus Christ. If you have, the satisfaction of knowing it will abundantly reward your pains: if you have not, you will find a more reasonable occasion for tears than can be met with in a tragedy. This matter deserves great consideration by all, but especially by those designed for the ministry; who ought above all things to make their own calling and election sure, lest after they have preached to others, they themselves should be cast away."

These advices and exhortations of his parents had a proper influence on his mind. He began to apply himself with diligence to the study of divinity in his leisure hours, and became more desirous of entering into orders. He wrote twice to his father on this subject. His father answered him in March, and informed him that he had changed his mind, and was then inclined that he should take orders that summer: "But in the first place," says he, "if you love yourself or me, pray heartily."

The books which, in the course of his reading this summer, before his ordination, had the greatest influence both on his judgment and affections, were Thomas a Kempis and Bishop Taylor's Rules of Holy Living and Dying. Not that he implicitly received every thing they taught; but they roused his attention to the spirit and tendency of the Christian religion, and thoroughly convinced him that its influence over the heart and life is much more extensive than he had before imagined. "He began to see that true religion is seated in the heart, and that God's law extends to all our thoughts as well as words and actions." * He was however, very angry at Kempis for being too *strict*, though he then read him only in Dean Stanhope's translation.† We cannot but remark here a singular feature in Mr. Wesley's character; that contrary to the disposition of most young men of twenty-two, who have been educated in the habits of study, he was diffident of his own judgment till he had heard the opinion of others; and this disposition is more or less visible through the whole of his life. On this occasion he consulted his parents, stated his objections to some things in Kempis, and asked their opinion. His letter is dated May 29. "I was lately advised," says he, "to read Thomas a Kempis over, which I had frequently seen, but never much looked into before. I think he must have been a person of great piety and devotion; but it is my misfortune to differ from him in some of his main points. I cannot think that when God sent us into the world, he had irreversibly decreed that we should be perpetually miserable in it. If our taking up the cross imply our bidding adieu to all joy and satisfaction, how is it reconcilable with what Solomon expressly affirms of religion, 'That her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace'? Another of his tenets is, that all mirth or pleasure is useless, if not

* Wesley's Works, vol. xxvi. p. 274. † Ibid.

sinful—and that nothing is an affliction to a good man; that he ought to thank God even for sending him misery. This, in my opinion, is contrary to God's design in afflicting us: for though he chasteneth those whom he loveth, yet it is in order to humble them. I hope when you have time, you will give me your thoughts on these subjects, and set me right if I am mistaken."

His mother's letter in answer to this is dated June the 8th, in which she makes many judicious observations on the points he had mentioned. Among other things, she says, "I take Kempis to have been an honest weak man, that had more zeal than knowledge, by his condemning all mirth or pleasure, as sinful or useless, in opposition to so many direct and plain texts of Scripture. Would you judge of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of pleasure? of the innocence or malignity of actions? take this rule:—Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things; in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind; that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself."

His father's letter is dated July 14. "As for Thomas a Kempis," says he, "all the world are apt to strain either on one side or the other: but, for all that, mortification is still an indispensable christian duty. The world is a Syren, and we must have a care of her: and if the *young man* will *rejoice in his youth*, yet let him take care that his joys be innocent; and, in order to this, remember, that *for all these things* God will bring him into judgment. I have only this to add of my friend and old companion, that, making some grains of allowance, he may be read to great advantage; nay, that it is almost impossible to peruse him seriously without admiring, and I think in some measure imitating his heroic strains of humility, piety, and devotion. But I reckon you have, before this, received your mother's letter, who has leisure to bolt the matter to the bran."*

Perceiving the good effects of consulting his parents, and that his mother in particular took a pleasure in discussing at large the subjects he proposed to her, he consulted her in a letter dated June the 18th, on some things he had met with in Bishop Taylor. "You have so well satisfied me," says he, "as to the tenets of Thomas a Kempis, that I have ventured to trouble you once more on a more dubious subject. I have heard one I take to be a person of good judgment say, that she would advise no one very young, to read Dr. Taylor on Living and Dying. She added, that he almost put her out of her senses when she was fifteen or sixteen years old; because he seemed to exclude all from being in a way of salvation who did not come up to his rules, some of which are altogether impracticable. A fear of being tedious will make me confine myself to one or two instances,

* Extracts of both these letters are inserted in the Armin. Magaz. vol. i. p. 30, 33: but the original of his father's, and a copy of his mother's, are before me.

in which I am doubtful; though several others might be produced of almost equal consequence." He then states several particulars which Bishop Taylor makes necessary parts of humility and repentance; one of which, in reference to humility, is, that, "We must be sure, in some sense or other, to think ourselves the worst in every company where we come." And in treating of repentance he says, "Whether God has forgiven us or no, we know not, therefore be sorrowful for ever having sinned."—"I take the more notice of this last sentence," says Mr. Wesley, "because it seems to contradict his own words in the next section, where he says, that by the Lord's Supper all the members are united to one another, and to Christ the Head. The Holy Ghost confers on us the graces necessary for, and our souls receive the seeds of, an immortal nature. Now surely these graces are not of so little force as that we cannot perceive whether we have them or not; if we dwell in Christ and Christ in us, which he will not do unless we are regenerate, certainly we must be sensible of it. If we can never have any certainty of our being in a state of salvation, good reason it is, that every moment should be spent, not in joy, but in fear and trembling; and then undoubtedly, in this life, we are of all men most miserable. God deliver us from such a fearful expectation as this. Humility is undoubtedly necessary to salvation; and if all these things are essential to humility, who can be humble? who can be saved?"

His mother's answer is dated July 21. She observes, that though she had a great deal of business, was infirm, and but slow of understanding, yet it was a great pleasure to correspond with him on religious subjects, and if it might be of the least advantage to him, she should greatly rejoice. She then tells him, that what Dr. Taylor calls humility is not the virtue itself, but the accidental effects of it, which may in some instances, and must in others, be separated from it. She then proceeds to state her own idea of humility.

"Humility is the mean between pride, or an overvaluing ourselves on one side, and a base abject temper on the other. It consists in an *habitual disposition* to think meanly of ourselves; which disposition is wrought in us by a true knowledge of God; his supreme essential glory, his absolute immense perfection of being; and a just sense of our dependence upon him, and past offences against him; together with a consciousness of our present infirmities and frailties," &c., &c.

This correspondence would undoubtedly tend very much to improve so young a man as Mr. Wesley then was. It engaged him in a close and critical examination of the authors he was reading, and fixed the subjects on his mind. It is indeed evident, that Dr. Taylor's work not only affected his heart, but engaged him in the pursuit of further knowledge of subjects so interesting to his happiness. He therefore answered his mother's letter on the 29th of July; and both this letter and the answer to it are worthy of being pre-

served; the one, as a specimen of his manner of reasoning at this early period of life; and the other, as it affords some excellent practical observations. But as they are too long to be inserted here, I shall only present the reader with an extract from each, which I hope he will not think tedious.

"You have much obliged me," says Mr. Wesley, "by your thoughts on Dr. Taylor, especially with respect to humility, which is a point he does not seem to me sufficiently to clear. As to absolute humility, consisting in a mean opinion of ourselves, considered with respect to God alone, I can readily join with his opinion. But I am more uncertain as to comparative, if I may so term it; and think some plausible reasons may be alleged to show, it is not in our power, and consequently not a virtue, to think ourselves the worst in every company.

"We have so invincible an attachment to truth already perceived, that it is impossible for us to disbelieve it. A distinct perception commands our assent, and the will is under a moral necessity of yielding to it. It is not therefore in every case a matter of choice, whether we will believe ourselves worse than our neighbor, or no; since we may distinctly perceive the truth of this proposition, He is worse than I; and then the judgment is not free. One, for instance, who is in company with a free-thinker, or other person signally debauched in faith and practice, cannot avoid knowing himself to be the better of the two: these propositions extorting our assent; an atheist is worse than a believer; a man who endeavors to please God is better than he who defies him.

"If a true knowledge of God be necessary to absolute humility, a true knowledge of our neighbor should be necessary to comparative. But to judge one's self the worst of all men, implies a want of such knowledge. No knowledge can be, where there is not certain evidence; which we have not, whether we compare ourselves with our acquaintance, or strangers. In the one case we have only imperfect evidence, unless we can see through the heart; in the other, we have none at all.

"Again, this kind of humility can never be well-pleasing to God, since it does not flow from faith, without which it is impossible to please him. Faith is a species of belief, and belief is defined an assent to a proposition upon reasonable grounds. Without rational grounds there is therefore no belief, and consequently no faith.

"That we can never be so certain of the pardon of our sins, as to be assured they will never rise up against us, I firmly believe. We know that they will infallibly do so if ever we apostatize; and I am not satisfied what evidence there can be of our final perseverance, till we have finished our course. But I am persuaded we may know if we are NOW in a state of salvation, since that is expressly promised

in the Holy Scriptures to our sincere endeavors, and we are surely able to judge of our own sincerity.

"As I understand faith to be an assent to any truth upon rational grounds, I do not think it possible, without perjury, to swear I believe anything, unless I have rational grounds for my persuasion. Now that which contradicts reason cannot be said to stand on rational grounds; and such undoubtedly is every proposition which is incompatible with the Divine justice or mercy. I can therefore never say I believe such a proposition; since it is impossible to assent upon reasonable evidence where it is not in being.

"What then shall I say of predestination? An everlasting purpose of God to deliver some from damnation, does, I suppose, exclude all from that deliverance who are not chosen. And if it was inevitably decreed from eternity, that such a determinate part of mankind should be saved, and none beside them, a vast majority of the world were only born to eternal death, without so much as a possibility of avoiding it. How is this consistent with either the Divine justice or mercy? Is it merciful to ordain a creature to everlasting misery? Is it just to punish man for crimes which he could not but commit? That God should be the author of sin and injustice, which must, I think, be the consequence of maintaining this opinion, is a contradiction to the clearest ideas we have of the Divine nature and perfections.

"I call faith an assent upon rational grounds; because I hold Divine testimony to be the most reasonable of all evidence whatever. Faith must necessarily, at length, be resolved into reason. God is true, therefore what he says is true: he hath said this, therefore this is true. When any one can bring me more reasonable propositions than these, I am ready to assent to them: till then, it will be highly unreasonable to change my opinion."

This letter is sufficient evidence how deeply Mr. Wesley was engaged, at this time, in the study of Dr. Taylor's Rules of Holy Living and Dying, to which he chiefly ascribes his first religious impressions; and it is pleasing to observe how early he adopted his opinion of universal redemption, which he so uniformly held, and so ably defended in the subsequent part of his life.

His mother's letter is dated August the 18th. "You say that I have obliged you by sending my thoughts of humility, and yet you do not seem to regard them in the least; but still dwell on that single point in Dr. Taylor, of thinking ourselves the worst in every company; though the necessity of thinking so is not inferred from my definition. I shall answer your arguments, after I have observed, that we differ in our notions of the virtue itself. You will have it consist in thinking meanly of ourselves; I, in an habitual disposition to think meanly of ourselves; which I take to be more comprehensive, because it extends to all the cases wherein that virtue can be

exercised; either in relation to God, ourselves, or our neighbor; and renders your distinction of absolute and comparative humility perfectly needless.

"We may in many instances think very meanly of ourselves without being humble; nay sometimes our very pride will lead us to condemn ourselves; as when we have said or done anything which lessens that esteem of men we earnestly covet. As to what you call absolute humility, with respect to God, what great matter is there in it? Had we only a mere speculative knowledge of that awful Being, and only considered him as the Creator and Sovereign Lord of the universe; yet since that first notion of him implies that he is a God of absolute and infinite perfection and glory, we cannot contemplate that glory, or conceive him present, without the most exquisite diminution of ourselves before him.

"The other part of your definition I cannot approve, because I think all those comparisons are rather the effects of pride than of humility.

"Though truth is the object of the understanding; and all truths as such, agree in one common excellence, yet there are some truths which are comparatively of so small value, because of little use, that it is no matter whether we know them or not. Among these I rank the right answer to your question, whether our neighbor or we be worse. Of what importance can this inquiry be to us? Comparisons in these cases are very odious, and do most certainly proceed from some bad principle in those who make them. So far should we be from reasoning upon the case, that we ought not to permit ourselves to entertain such thoughts, but if they ever intrude, to reject them with abhorrence.

"Supposing that in some cases the truth of that proposition, my neighbor is worse than I, be ever so evident, yet what does it avail? Since two persons in different respects may be better and worse than each other. There is nothing plainer than that a free-thinker as a free-thinker; and an atheist as an atheist, is worse in that respect than a believer as a believer. But if that believer's practice does not correspond to his faith—he is worse than an infidel.

"If we are not obliged to think ourselves the worst in every company, I am perfectly sure that a man sincerely humble, will be afraid to think himself the best in any. And though it should be his lot (for it can never be his choice) to fall into the company of notorious sinners; who makes thee to differ? Or, what hast thou that thou hast not received? is sufficient, if well considered, to humble us, and silence all aspiring thoughts and self-applause; and may instruct us to ascribe our preservation from enormous offences to the sovereign grace of God, and not to our own natural purity or strength.

"You are somewhat mistaken in your notions of faith. All faith is an assent, but all assent is not faith. Some truths are self-evident,

and we assent to them because they are so. Others, after a regular and formal process of reason by way of deduction from some self-evident principle, gain our assent. This is not properly faith but science. Some again we assent to, not because they are self-evident, or because we have attained the knowledge of them in a regular method by a train of arguments; but because they have been revealed to us, either by God or man, and these are the proper objects of faith. The true measure of faith is the authority of the revealer, the weight of which always holds proportion to our conviction of his ability and integrity. Divine faith is an assent to whatever God has revealed to us, because he has revealed it."*

It was impossible for Mr. Wesley to correspond with such a parent, and on such subjects, without being improved. And it is certain that he never forgot some of the rules and maxims which he had learned from her. The effect of his present inquiries was deep and lasting. In reading Kempis, he tells us that he had frequently much sensible comfort, such as he was an utter stranger to before. And the chapter in Dr. Taylor on purity of intention, convinced him of the necessity of being holy in heart, as well as regular in his outward deportment. Meeting likewise with a religious friend about this time, which he never had before, he began to alter the whole form of his conversation, and to set in earnest upon *a new life*. He communicated every week. He watched against all sin, whether in word or deed; and began to aim at, and pray for, inward holiness.†

Having now determined to devote himself wholly to God, his letters to his parents carried a savor of religion, which before they had wanted: this made his father say to him in a letter of August the 2d, "If you be what you write, you and I shall be happy, and you will much alleviate my misfortune." He soon found that his son was not double minded. The time of his ordination now drew near. His father wrote to him on this subject, in a letter dated September the 7th, in which he says, "God fit you for your great work. Fast, watch, and pray; believe, love, endure, and be happy; towards which you shall never want the most ardent prayers of your affectionate father." In preparing for his ordination he found some scruples on his mind respecting the damnatory clause in the Athanasian creed; which he proposed to his father, who afterwards gave him his opinion upon it. Having prepared himself with the most conscientious care for the ministerial office, he was ordained Deacon on Sunday, the nineteenth of this month, by Dr. Potter, then Bishop of Oxford.

Mr. Wesley's ordination supplied him with an additional motive to prosecute the study of Divinity; which he did, by directing his

* The remaining part of this letter on predestination is inserted in the Arminian Magazine, vol. i. page 36, though with an error in the date.

† Wesley's Works, vol. xxvi. page 274.

inquiries into the evidences and reasonableness of the christian religion. He wrote to his mother on this subject November the 3d, who in her answer dated the 10th, encourages him to persevere in such investigations without any fear of being injured by them. "I highly approve," says she, "of your care to search into the grounds and reasons of your most holy religion; which you may do, if your intention be pure, and yet retain the integrity of your faith. Nay, the more you study on that subject, the more reason you will find to depend on the veracity of God; inasmuch as your perception of him will be clearer, and you will more plainly discover the congruity there is between the ordinances and precepts of the gospel, and right reason. Nor is it an hard matter to prove that the whole system of Christianity is founded thereon."

It was however, but a small portion of his time that Mr. Wesley employed in these studies. His private diary shows how diligent he was in the study of the classics, and other books in different branches of science, and in the performance of his academical exercises. The time also drew near when it was expected that the election of a Fellow of Lincoln College would take place; with a view to which his friends had been exerting themselves in his favor all the summer.* When Dr. Morley, the Rector, was spoken to on the subject, he said, "I will inquire into Mr. Wesley's character." He did so, and gave him leave to stand a candidate. He afterwards became his friend in that business, and used all the influence he had in his favor. His father in a letter of July says, "I waited on Dr. Morley, and found him more civil than ever. I will write to the Bishop of Lincoln again, and to your brother Samuel the next post. Study hard lest your opponents beat you." In another letter, speaking of Dr. Morley, he says, "You are infinitely obliged to that generous man."

In election business, the passions of men generally run high, and every circumstance is laid hold of, which can by any means be so managed as to influence the public opinion against an opponent. And Mr. Wesley's late seriousness did not escape the banter and ridicule of his adversaries at Lincoln, on this occasion. In reference to this his father observes in a letter of August; "As for the gentlemen candidates you write of—Does any body think that the devil has no agents left? It is a very callow virtue, sure, that cannot bear being laughed at. I think our Captain and Master endured something more for us, before he entered into glory: and unless we follow his steps, in vain do we hope to share that glory with him. Nor shall any who sincerely endeavor to serve him, either by turning others to righteousness, or keeping them steadfast in it, lose their reward." And in his letter of October the 19th, he exhorts him to bear patiently what was said of him at Lincoln: "but be sure," says he, "never to return the like treatment to your enemy. You and I have hitherto done the

* His father mentions it in his letter of the 26th of January of this year.

best we could in that affair; do you continue to do the same, and rest the whole with Providence."

His mother writes to him on this occasion more in the way of encouragement and caution. "If it be," says she, "a weak virtue, that cannot bear being laughed at, I am sure it is a strong and well confirmed virtue that can stand the test of a brisk buffoonery. I doubt too many people, though well inclined, have yet made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience merely because they could not bear raillery. Some young persons have a natural excess of bashfulness; others are so tender of what they call honor, that they cannot endure to be made a jest of. I would therefore advise those who are in the beginning of a christian course, to shun the company of profane wits, as they would the plague or poverty: and never to contract an intimacy with any, but such as have a good sense of religion."

But notwithstanding the warm opposition which his opponents made against him, Mr. Wesley's general good character for learning and diligence, gave such firmness and zeal to his friends, that on Thursday, March the 17th, 1726, he was elected Fellow of Lincoln College.* His father emphatically expresses his satisfaction on this occasion, in a letter of the first of April. "I have both of yours since your election: in both, you express yourself as becometh you. What will be my own fate before the summer be over, God knows; *sed passi graviora.*—Wherever I am, my Jack is Fellow of Lincoln." His mother, in a letter of March 30, tells him, in her usual strain of piety, "I think myself obliged to return great thanks to Almighty God, for giving you good success at Lincoln. Let whoever he pleased be the instrument, to him and to him alone the glory appertains."

The Monday following his election, being March 21, he wrote to his brother Samuel,† expressing his gratitude for the assistance he had given him in that affair. With this letter he sent two or three copies of verses, which seem, by what he says of them, to have been written at an early period. "I have not yet," says he, "been able to meet with one or two gentlemen, from whom I am in hopes of getting two or three copies of verses. The most tolerable of my own, if any such there were, you probably received from Leyburn. Some of those I had besides, I have sent here; and shall be very glad if they are capable of being so corrected, as to be of any service to you." He sent three specimens of his poetry with this letter: the two following I shall insert; which, considered as hasty productions, the mere amusement of an hour or two, and sent in their rough state, I am confident every good judge will pronounce excellent, notwithstanding the modesty with which he speaks of them.

* Private Diary.

† This letter, and the verses which accompanied it, were inserted some years ago, by Mr. Badcock, in the Westminster Magazine. The letter is there without a date, which I have taken from Mr. John Wesley's Diary. Mr. Badcock tells the public, that he had a variety of curious papers by him, which show Mr. Wesley in a light which perhaps he had forgot, &c.—I shall have occasion to mention this circumstance in another place.

HORACE, Lib. I. Ode XXII.

Integrity needs no defence;
The man who trusts to innocence,
Nor wants the darts Numidians throw,
Nor arrows of the Parthian bow.

Secure o'er Libya's sandy seas,
Or hoary Caucasus he strays,
O'er regions scarcely known to fame,
Wash'd by Hydaspes' fabled stream.

While void of cares, of nought afraid,
Late in the Sabine woods I stray'd;
On Sylvia's lips, while pleas'd I sung,
How love and soft persuasion hung!

A rav'nous wolf intent on food,
Rush'd from the covert of the wood;
Yet dar'd not violate the grove
Secur'd by innocence and love.

Nor Mauritania's sultry plain,
So large a savage does contain;
Nor e'er so huge a monster treads
Warlike Apulia's beechen shades.

Place me where no revolving sun
Does o'er his radient circle run;
Where clouds and damps alone appear,
And poison the unwholesome year:

Place me in that effulgent day
Beneath the sun's directer ray;
No change from its fix'd place shall move
The basis of my lasting love.

In imitation of, *Quis desiderio sit Pudor*, &c. Sent to a gentleman on the death of his Father.

What shame shall stop our flowing tears?
What end shall our just sorrows know?
Since fate, relentless to our prayers,
Has giv'n the long destructive blow!

Ye Muses, strike the sounding string,
In plaintive strains his loss deplore;
And teach an artless voice to sing
The great, the bounteous, now no more!

For him the wise and good shall mourn,
While late records his fame declare:
And oft as rolling years return,
Shall pay his tomb a grateful tear.

Ah! what avail their plaints to thee?
Ah! what avails his fame declar'd?
Thou blam'st, alas! the just decree
Whence virtue meets its just reward.

Though sweeter sounds adorn'd thy tongue
  Than Thracian Orpheus whilom play'd;
When list'ning to the morning song
  Each tree bow'd down its leafy head:

Never! ah, never from the gloom
  Of unrelenting Pluto's sway,
Could the thin shade again resume
  Its ancient tenement of clay.

Indulgent patience, heav'n-born guest!
  Thy healing wings around display;
Thou gently calm'st the stormy breast
  And driv'st the tyrant grief away.

Corroding care and eating pain,
  By just degrees thy influence own;
And lovely lasting peace again
  Resumes her long deserted throne.

His parents now invited him to spend some time with them in the country. Accordingly he left Oxford in April, and staid the whole summer at Epworth and Wroote. During this time he usually read prayers and preached twice on the Lord's-day, and otherways assisted his father as occasion required. His time here was by no means wasted; he still pursued his studies, had frequent opportunities of conversing with his parents on subjects highly interesting and instructive, and kept a regular diary of what passed. He often takes notice of the particular subjects discussed in their various conversations, and mentions the practical observations his parents made, and sometimes adds his own. Among others, were the following; how to increase our faith, our hope, and our love of God: prudence, simplicity, sincerity, pride, vanity; wit, humor, fancy, courtesy, and general usefulness. His parents made such observations as reflection and long experience had suggested to them, and he carefully minuted down such rules and maxims as appeared to him important.

Mr. Wesley returned to Oxford on the 21st of September, and resumed his usual course of studies. His literary character was now established in the University: he was acknowledged by all parties to be a man of talents, and an excellent critic in the learned languages. His compositions were distinguished by an elegant simplicity of style, and justness of thought, that strongly marked the excellence of his classical taste. His skill in logic, or the art of reasoning, was universally known and admired. The high opinion that was entertained of him, in these respects, was soon publicly expressed by choosing him Greek lecturer and moderator of the classes, on the 7th of November; though he had only been elected Fellow of the college in March, was little more than twenty-three years of age, and had not yet proceeded Master of Arts.

I have been the more exact in bringing forward all the particulars concerning him, from the latter end of the year 1724, to the present

time, because they have been very imperfectly known, and some of them very erroneously stated by all his biographers, who have hitherto attempted to give any account of him. It is also evident, that an accurate knowledge of these particulars, does him credit: the correspondence relative to his ordination gives the reader a view of the simplicity and integrity of his heart, in the most artless and undisguised manner, and does infinite honor to the rational affection and pious care of his parents: it likewise points out to us the kind of advice which had the chief influence in forming his religious character; and the circumstances of his preferment at Lincoln College, give the most unequivocal proof of his merit, and of the high reputation he had acquired in the university for learning, diligence, and attention to discipline, at this early period of life.

It appears from what has already been said, that Mr. Wesley did not devote all his time to the severer studies, but occasionally paid his court to the muses with good success. His paraphrase on the first eighteen verses of the 104th Psalm, is a more finished piece than any thing he had written before. He began to write it on the 19th of August this year, when at Epworth; and for its beauty and excellence, it deserves to be printed with more accuracy than has yet been done. I shall therefore transcribe it from the original manuscript.

VERSE 1. Upborne aloft on vent'rous wing,
While, spurning earthly themes, I soar,
Through paths untrod before,
What God, what seraph shall I sing?
Whom but thee should I proclaim,
Author of this wond'rous frame?
Eternal uncreated Lord,
Enshrin'd in glory's radiant blaze!
At whose prolific voice, whose potent word,
Commanded, nothing swift retir'd, and worlds began their race.

2. Thou, brooding o'er the realms of night,
Th' unbottom'd infinite abyss,
Bad'st the deep her rage surcease,
And said'st let there be light!
Æthereal light thy call obey'd,
Glad she left her native shade,
Through the wide void her living waters past;
Darkness turn'd his murmuring head,
Resign'd the reins, and trembling fled;
The crystal waves roll'd on, and filled the ambient waste.

2. In light, effulgent robe, array'd,
Thou left'st the beauteous realms of day!
The golden towers inclin'd their head,
As their Sov'reign took his way.
3, 4. The all-encircling bounds (a shining train,
Minist'ring flames around him flew)
Through the vast profound he drew,
When lo! sequacious to his fruitful hand,
Heaven o'er the uncolor'd void, her azure curtain threw.

Lo! marching o'er the empty space,
The fluid stores in order rise
With adamantine chains of liquid glass,
To bind the new-born fabric of the skies.

VERSE 3. Downward the Almighty Builder rode,
Old Chaos groan'd beneath the God,
Sable clouds his pompous car,
Harnest winds before him ran,
Proud to wear their Maker's chain,
And told, with hoarse-resounding voice, his coming from afar.

5. Embryon earth the signal knew,
And rear'd from night's dark womb her infant head,
6. Though yet prevailing waves her hills o'erspread
And stain'd their sickly face with pallid hue.
7. But when loud thunders the pursuit began,
Back the affrighted spoilers ran;
8. In vain aspiring hills opposed their race,
O'er hills and vales with equal haste,
The flying squadrons past,
Till safe within the walls of their appointed place:
9. There firmly fix'd, their sure enclosures stand,
Unconquerable bounds of ever-during sand!
10. He spake! From the tall mountain's wounded side,
Fresh springs roll'd down their silver tide:
O'er the glad vales the shining wanderers stray,
Soft murmuring as they flow,
11. While in their cooling wave inclining low,
The untaught natives of the field their parching thirst allay.
12. High seated on the dancing sprays,
Chequering with varied light their parent streams,
The feather'd quires attune their artless lays
Safe from the dreaded heat of solar beams.

13. Genial show'rs at his command,
Pour plenty o'er the barren land:
Laboring with parent throes,
14. See! the teeming hills disclose
A new birth: see cheerful green,
Transitory, pleasing scene,
O'er the smiling landskip glow,
And gladden all the vale below.
15. Along the mountain's craggy brow,
Amiably dreadful now!
See the clasping vine dispread
Her gently-rising verdant head:
See the purple grape appear,
Kind relief of human care!

16. Instinct with circling life, thy skill
Uprear'd the olive's loaded bough;
What time on Lebanon's proud hill
Slow rose the stately cedar's brow.
Nor less rejoice the lowly plains,
Of useful corn the fertile bed,
Than when the lordly cedar reigns,
A beauteous, but a barren shade.

VERSE 17. While in his arms the painted train,
Warbling to the vocal grove,
Sweetly tell their pleasing pain,
Willing slaves to genial love.

18. While the wild-goats, an active throng,
From rock to rock light-bounding fly,
Jehovah's praise in solemn song,
Shall echo through the vaulted sky.

The reader who carefully examines these specimens of his poetical talents, and at the same time considers that he was designed for a more noble employment than making verses, however excellent they might be, will highly approve of the judicious advice his mother gave him about this time. "I would not have you leave off making verses," says she; "rather make poetry sometimes your diversion, though never your business."

Mr. Wesley was now more desirous than ever, of improving his time to the best advantage. But as he had not yet taken his degree of Master of Arts, the whole of his time was not at his own disposal. But such portions of it as were, he carefully spent in pursuit of such knowledge as promised to be beneficial to himself, and would enable him to benefit others; never indulging himself in an idle useless curiosity, which is the common fault of most young men in the conduct of their studies. He expresses his sentiments on this head in a letter to his mother of January, 1727. "I am shortly to take my master's degree. As I shall from that time be less interrupted by business not of my own choosing, I have drawn up for myself a scheme of studies from which I do not intend, for some years at least, to vary. I am perfectly come over to your opinion, that there are many truths it is not worth while to know. Curiosity indeed might be a sufficient plea for our laying out some time upon them, if we had half a dozen centuries of life to come; but methinks it is great ill-husbandry to spend a considerable part of the small pittance now allowed us, in what makes us neither a quick nor a sure return.

"Two days ago I was reading a dispute between those celebrated masters of controversy, Bishop Atterbury and Bishop Hoadly; but must own I was so injudicious as to break off in the middle. I could not conceive, that the dignity of the end was at all proportioned to the difficulty of attaining it. And I thought the labor of twenty or thirty hours, if I was sure of succeeding, which I was not, would be but ill rewarded by that important piece of knowledge, whether Bishop Hoadly had misunderstood Bishop Atterbury or no?"

The following paragraph, in the same letter, will show the reader how diligent he had long been in improving the occasions which occurred, of impressing a sense of religion on the minds of his companions, and of his soft and obliging manner of doing it. "About a year and a half ago," says he, "I stole out of company at eight in the evening, with a young gentleman with whom I was intimate. As we took a

turn in an isle of St. Mary's Church, in expectation of a young lady's funeral, with whom we were both acquainted, I asked him if he really thought himself my friend? and if he did, why he would not do me all the good he could? He began to protest,—in which I cut him short, by desiring him to oblige me in an instance, which he could not deny to be in his own power: to let me have the pleasure of making him a whole Christian, to which I knew he was at least half persuaded already. That he could not do me a greater kindness, as both of us would be fully convinced when we came to follow that young woman."

"He turned exceedingly serious, and kept something of that disposition ever since. Yesterday was a fortnight he died of a consumption. I saw him three days before he died; and on the Sunday following did him the last good office I could here, by preaching his funeral sermon; which was his desire when living."

Mr. Wesley proceeded Master of Arts on the 14th of February,* and acquired considerable reputation in his disputation for his degree; on which account his mother congratulates him in a letter of the fourteenth of March. On the 19th he writes thus to her. "One advantage at least, my degree has given me; I am now at liberty, and shall be in a great measure for some time, to choose my own employment. And as I believe I know my own deficiencies best, and which of them are most necessary to be supplied; I hope my time will turn to somewhat better account, than when it was not so much in my own disposal." He had already fixed the plan of his studies; but how to attain a more practical knowledge of God, and a more entire conformity to his will, in the temper of his mind and in all his actions, was a point not so easily determined. He saw what the law of God required him to be, and was deeply sensible of his deficiencies; but he did not yet see the way of faith, which the gospel points out as the way of victory, of holiness, and of peace. There is nothing more natural in this state of mind, than for a person to imagine, that some other situation in life would be more advantageous to him than that in which he is placed. He feels his present difficulties and hinderances in the way of religion; but he does not see, that every situation of life has its difficulties and hinderances, which a Christian is called upon to conquer, not to shun. Mr. Wesley however, thought, that the company he was necessarily exposed to at Oxford, was a hinderance to his progress in religion, and that a seclusion from the world would be highly advantageous to him in this respect. Though we must disapprove of the opinion, which his riper judgment likewise condemned, we cannot but acknowledge that it gives the clearest evidence of his sincerity; and that he was not religious, to be seen of men. He expresses the thoughts he then had of this matter, in the same letter

* Private Diary.

of the 19th of March. "The *conversation* of one or two persons, whom you may have heard me speak of, I hope never without gratitude, first took off my relish for most other pleasures, so far that I despised them in comparison of *that.* I have since proceeded a step further; to slight them absolutely. And I am so little at present in love with even company, the most elegant entertainment next to books; that, unless the persons have a religious turn of thought, I am much better pleased without them. I think it is the settled temper of my soul, that I should prefer, at least for some time, such a retirement, as would seclude me from all the world, to the station I am now in. Not that this is by any means unpleasant to me; but I imagine it would be more improving to be in a place where I might confirm or implant in my mind what habits I would, without interruption, before the flexibility of youth be over.

"A school in Yorkshire was proposed to me lately, on which I shall think more, when it appears whether I may have it or not. A good salary is annexed to it. But what has made me wish for it most, is the frightful description, as they call it, which some gentlemen who know the place, gave me of it yesterday. It lies in a little vale, so pent up between two hills, that it is scarce accessible on any side; so that you can expect little company from without, and within there is none at all. I should therefore be entirely at liberty to converse with company of my own choosing, whom for that reason I would bring with me; and company equally agreeable, wherever I fixed, could not put me to less expense.

"The sun that walks his airy way
To cheer the world, and bring the day;
The moon that shines with borrow'd light,
The stars that gild the gloomy night,
All of these, and all I see,
Should be sung, and sung by me:
These praise their Maker as they can,
But want, and ask the tongue of man."

"I am full of business: but have found a way to write, without taking any time from that. It is but rising an hour sooner in the morning, and going into company an hour later in the evening; both which may be done without any inconvenience." The school however was otherways disposed of; at which his mother was well pleased. "I am not sorry," says she, "that you have missed the school; that way of life would not agree with your constitution; and I hope God has better work for you to do."

Mr. Wesley saw, that a loose and desultory way of reading and studying, was not the way to accurate knowledge; and to avoid falling into this error, he had, some time before he took his master's degree, laid down a plan of study which he now closely pursued. Certain hours, in the morning and afternoon, of each day in the week,

were appropriated to the study of certain branches of knowledge: and he never suffered himself to deviate from the rule he had laid down. Thus, his hours of study on Mondays and Tuesdays, were devoted to the Greek and Roman classics, historians and poets.—Wednesdays, to logic and ethics.—Thursdays, to Hebrew and Arabic.—Fridays, to metaphysics and natural philosophy.—Saturdays, to oratory and poetry, chiefly composing.—Sundays, to divinity. In the intermediate hours, between these more fixed studies, he perfected himself in the French language, which he had begun to learn two or three years before: he also read a great variety of modern authors in almost every department of science. His method was this: he first read an author regularly through; then, in the second reading, transcribed into his collections, such passages as he thought important, either for the information they contained, or the beauty of expression. This method not only inured him to industry and accuracy, but it considerably increased his stock of knowledge, and gave him a familiar acquaintance with the authors he had read.

It has been doubted by some persons, whether the mathematics entered into Mr. Wesley's plan of studies at the university. But among the authors mentioned in his Diary, I find, Euclid, Keil, S'Gravesande, Sir Isaac Nowton, &c. and he seems to have studied them with great attention. He sometimes amused himself with experiments in optics.

It has been before observed, that his father had two livings. He now became less able to attend to the duties of his station, than formerly; especially as it was difficult, and sometimes dangerous in the winter, to pass between Epworth and Wroote: and it was not easy to procure an assistant to his mind, in this remote corner of the kingdom. He was therefore desirous, that his son, Mr. John Wesley, should come into the country, and reside chiefly at Wroote, as his curate. Mr. Wesley complied with his father's request, who thus expresses himself in a letter of June,—"I do not think that I have thanked you enough for your kind and dutiful letter of the 14th instant. When you come hither, your head-quarters will, I believe, for the most part be at Wroote, and mine at Epworth; though sometimes making a change." Accordingly, he left Oxford on the 4th of August; and coming to London, spent some days with his brother Samuel, and then proceeded on his journey to take upon him his appointed charge. In this part of Lincolnshire, the ague is endemic, and in October he was seized with it; at the same time he was called to Oxford, probably to oblige Dr. Morley, the Rector of Lincoln College, on some election business. This gentleman had rendered such services to Mr. Wesley, in his election to Lincoln, that he used to say, "I can refuse Dr. Morley nothing." In the present instance, his gratitude overcame all objections against travelling on horseback, through wet and cold, with an ague upon him. He reached Oxford

on the 16th, and left it again on the 25th, travelling in the same manner back to Wroote, though often very ill on the road. He now continued in the country for some time, still pursuing the same plan of study, as far as the nature of his situation would permit.

Mr. Wesley's general knowledge, and agreeable conversation had endeared him to all his acquaintance at Oxford. He was a most engaging and instructive companion; open and communicative to his friends, and civil and obliging to all. The following letter will set this part of his character in a clear light. It was written by one of the Fellows of his own college, who, it seems, had been a good deal absent, and knew little of him, except what he had learned from the report of those who had been acquainted with him.

"*Coll. Linc. Dec.* 28, 1727.

"SIR,—Yesterday I had the satisfaction of receiving your kind and obliging letter, whereby you have given me a singular instance of that goodness and civility which is essential to your character; and strongly confirmed to me, the many encomiums which are given you in this respect, by all who have the happiness to know you. This makes me infinitely desirous of your acquaintance. And when I consider those shining qualities which I hear daily mentioned in your praise, I cannot but lament the great misfortune we all suffer, in the absence of so agreeable a person from the college. But I please myself with the thoughts of seeing you here on chapter-day, and of the happiness we shall have in your company in the summer. In the mean time, I return you my most sincere thanks for this favor, and assure you, that if it should ever lie in my power to serve you, no one will be more ready to do it, than, sir,

"Your most obliged and most humble servant,

"LEW. FENTON."

Mr. Wesley continued in the country till July, 1728, when he returned by way of London to Oxford, where he arrived on the 27th of this month, with a view to obtain priests' orders. No reason is assigned, why he was not ordained priest sooner: it is evident, however, that he had never applied for it, probably on account of his age. On Sunday, the 22d of September, he was ordained priest, by Dr. Potter, Bishop of Oxford, who had ordained him deacon in 1725. Mr. Wesley himself has made a mistake in the date of his ordination. In the first part of his Farther Appeal, he says, "I was ordained deacon in 1725, and priest in the year following." This only proves, that in giving the dates of things which had taken place, he did not always consult his diary, but trusted to his memory, which sometimes failed him. To convince the reader, that I have given the true date, I will insert below a part of his letter of Priests' Orders.*

* Tenor præsentium nos Johannes permissione divinâ Oxon. Episcopus, Notum facimus universis quod nos Episcopus antedictus die Dominico (viz.) Vicesimo secundo

October 1. He set out for Lincolnshire, and did not again visit Oxford till the 16th of June, 1729. At this time his brother Charles, Mr. Morgan, and one or two more, had just formed a little society, chiefly to assist each other in their studies, and to consult on the best method of employing their time to advantage. During his stay here, he was almost constantly with them in the evenings; but about the middle of August, he returned to his charge at Wroote, where he continued till he received the following letter from Dr. Morley, the Rector of his college, dated the 21st of October.—"At a meeting of the society, just before I left college, to consider of the proper method to preserve discipline and good government; among several things agreed on, it was in the opinion of all that were present, judged necessary that the junior Fellows who should be chosen Moderators, shall in person attend the duties of their office, if they do not prevail with some of the Fellows to officiate for them. We all thought it would be a great hardship on Mr. Fenton, to call him from a perpetual Curacy or Donative; yet this we must have done, had not Mr. Hutchins been so kind to him and us, as to free us from the uneasiness of doing a hard thing, by engaging to supply his place in the hall for the present year. Mr. Robinson would as willingly supply yours, but the serving of two cures about fourteen miles from Oxford, and ten at least as bad as the worst of your roads in the isle, makes it, he says, impossible for him to discharge the duty constantly. We hope it may be as much for your advantage to reside at college as where you are, if you take pupils, or can get a curacy in the neighborhood of Oxon. Your father may certainly have another curate, though not so much to his satisfaction: yet we are persuaded that this will not move him to hinder your return to college, since the interest of college, and obligation to statute requires it."—In consequence of this letter, he quitted his father's curacy at Wroote, and November 22, came to reside at Oxford.

die mensis Septembris, Anno Domini Millesimo Septingentesimo Vicesimo octavo in Ecclesia Cathedrali Christi Oxon. Sacros Ordines Dei Omnipotentis præsidio celebrantes: Dilectum nobis in Christo Johannem Wesley, Artis Magistrum, e Coll. Lincoln. Oxon. Socium.—ad Sacrum Presbyteratûs Ordinem juxta morem et ritus Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ admissimus et promovimus ipsumque in Presbyterum tunc et ibidem rite et Canonice Ordinavimus. Datum sub Sigillo nostro Episcopali in præmissorum fidem ac testimonium die mensis Annoque Domini supra expressis et nostræ Consecrationis Anno decimo quarto. Jo. Oxon.

CHAPTER II.

OF MR. WESLEY'S RESIDENCE AT OXFORD FROM NOVEMBER, 1729, TO OCTOBER, 1735; WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST METHODIST SOCIETY, DURING THIS PERIOD.

HITHERTO we have viewed Mr. Wesley, as the polite collegian, rising into notice and esteem for his literary talents; and in the humble station of curate to his father. The reader will observe, that he did not quit this station from discontent, or restless ambition, but at the call of the heads of his college. It is manifest, that he had not the least conception of what afterwards followed. In consequence of the order he had received, he now entered upon a new situation: he obtained pupils, and became a tutor in the college: he presided in the hall as moderator in the disputations, held six times a week, and had the chief direction of a religious society. As a tutor he was singularly diligent and careful of his pupils, considering himself responsible for them, not only to their parents and the community, but to God; and therefore labored to make them both scholars and Christians. Some of them disapproved of his religious severities, and refused to join with him in them, but still continued under his care as pupils, and warmly acknowledged their obligations to him. As moderator in the disputations, he acquired a facility and expertness in arguing; especially, as he himself observes, "in discerning and pointing out well covered and plausible fallacies," which afterwards gave him a great superiority over most of his numerous adversaries. But his endeavors to become religious, will form the chief subject of this chapter. I call all that he did mere endeavors, because he did not attain the end which he aimed at, peace of mind, comfort in God, and a command over all his passions. He was a long time before he was fully convinced that his own endeavors were insufficient to give him the mind that was in Christ. He clearly saw, in 1725, what the gospel was intended to do for him, and for all mankind; to be the means of reconciling him to God, and giving him a title to the heavenly inheritance; of cleansing him from sin, and preparing him for the enjoyment of heaven: and he retained this view of the general design of the gospel, from that period to the end of his life, without the least variation. But he did not yet understand the *method* proposed in the gospel, of putting a sinner in possession of these blessings, nor the order in which the mind is capable of acquiring them. It is true, he read the Scriptures daily, at this time, and in his religious researches was *homo unius libri*, a man of one book. But his preconceived opinions were as a blind before his mind, and completely hid from his view, the gospel method of attaining present salvation. This is no reproach to Mr. Wesley, nor any objection against

the doctrines he afterwards embraced. It is the common lot of all men to imbibe in their youth, notions which afterwards hinder them from perceiving the most obvious truths. It is well known that the systems of natural philosophy, which ingenious men have formed and taught to young students, have been the chief hinderances to the propress of knowledge.* What kept his mind in a state of perplexity, was a confused notion of justification; which he either confounded with sanctification, or thought a man must be sanctified before he can be justified. This notion hindered him from perceiving, that to justify in the language of Paul, is to pardon a repenting believing sinner, as an act of grace; not for the sake of any previous holiness in him, but through Jesus Christ alone. As soon as he was convinced of this, he was no longer embarrassed and perplexed; he saw immediately the plan which the gospel proposes of reconciling sinners to God, of making them holy in heart and life, and of giving them a sure hope, full of immortality.—But let us attend him through the period appropriated to this chapter, and we shall see the efforts of a great mind to do the will of God; and every step we take, will convince us of the uprightness of his intention.

It appears from the account I have given of Mr. Charles Wesley, that for more than two years before this time he had studied very hard, and through his brother's advice and influence was become deeply serious; that during the last summer he had received the sacrament weekly, and had prevailed on two or three young men to do the same; and that these gentlemen had occasionally met together for the purpose of assisting and encouraging each other in their duty, and of regulating their employments by certain rules. The regular method of arranging their studies and other employments procured

* The two following instances are remarkable proofs of this. Galen, was well acquainted with the difference between arteries and veins; he knew the effects of ligatures in the operation of bleeding, and had all the principal *data* familiar to his mind, from which Harvey concluded, that the blood circulates through the body. Yet Galen, though accustomed to the process of reasoning, drew no such conclusion from them; the notion that the blood moved to and fro, in the vessels, like the flux and reflux of the sea, so possessed and blinded his mind, that he could not perceive a consequence which naturally and obviously followed from the things which he knew. This veil remained on the minds of philosophers and physicians for about fourteen hundred years, so that Harvey deserves as much praise for breaking through the shackles of ancient error, and impartially following the light of truth, as for the discovery itself.

When Dr. Priestley's experiments on air, were first published in France, they roused the French chymists from a kind of lethargy (*de l'engourdissement*, as one of them expresses it,) yet Macquer, one of the first chymists, not only in France, but perhaps in Europe, speaking of the discovery of the nitrous gas, or air, has frankly acknowledged, that he hardly thought it possible an experienced chymist would ever have made it. That his principles would have hindered him from attempting the experiment, which was necessary to make the discovery in question. So true it is, that though in general, knowledge acquired leads the mind to a farther progress, yet, if we place too much confidence in received opinions, and in the consequences we draw from them, they may sometimes hinder us from discovering the most obvious truths. See Macquer's *Dictionnaire de Chymie*. Tom. 2, page 323, Edit. 1778.

them the distinguishing epithet of *Methodists*, which according to Mr. Charles, was given them before his brother came to Oxford in November. This is probably the most accurate account; for when Mr. Wesley speaks of this appellation, he mentions it only in very general terms, without attempting to state at what period of the society it was first given. "The exact regularity of their lives as well as studies," says he, "occasioned a young gentleman of Christ Church to say, 'here is a new set of *Methodists* sprung up;' alluding to some ancient physicians who were so called.* The name was new and quaint; so it took immediately, and the Methodists were known all over the university.

It does not appear, however, that these gentlemen met together at any fixed or stated times, or that they had made any regulations for this purpose before Mr. John Wesley joined them. When he came amongst them, they gladly committed the direction of the whole to him; and from this time the society began to assume a more regular form; it is from this period therefore, that he commences his history of it, in the following words:

"In November, 1729, four young gentlemen of Oxford, Mr. John Wesley, Fellow of Lincoln College; Mr. Charles Wesley, student of Christ Church; Mr. Morgan, commoner of Christ Church; and Mr. Kirkman, of Merton College; began to spend some evenings in a week together, in reading chiefly the Greek Testament. The next year two or three of Mr. John Wesley's pupils desired the liberty of meeting with them; and afterwards one of Mr. Charles Wesley's pupils. It was in 1732, that Mr. Ingham of Queen's College, and Mr. Broughton of Exeter, were added to their number. To these in April, was joined Mr. Clayton of Brazen-Nose, with two or three of his pupils. About the same time Mr. James Harvey was permitted to meet with them, and afterwards Mr. Whitefield." †

* Themison was the founder of this sect, about thirty or forty years before the Christian era; and it flourished, according to Alpinus, about three hundred years. Le Clerc informs us, that the physicians of this sect were called Methodists, because they took it into their head, to find out a more easy *method* of teaching and practising the art of physic. However this may be, it is certain that some of the greatest physicians of the time in which the sect flourished, were Methodists. That Themison was a man of the most extensive practice, is evidently implied in the words of Juvenal, if he speaks of the same person, which is generally supposed. He is describing the infirmities of an old man, and observes,

——— Circumfilit agmine facto
Morborum omne genus, quorum si nomina quæras
Promptius expediam ———
Quot Themison ægros autumno acciderit uno.

"A whole troop of all kinds of diseases rush upon him on all sides; if you ask their names, I could as soon reckon up how many patients Themison killed in one autumn."—Had his practice, however, been very unsuccessful, it is not probable it would have been so extensive as to become almost proverbial.

† Wesley's Works, vol. xv. page 375.

These four young gentlemen continued their meetings for some time, without any other views than their own benefit. But in the summer of 1730, Mr. Morgan called at the gaol to see a man who was condemned for killing his wife, and told them, that, from the conversation he had with one of the debtors, he verily believed it would do much good if any one would be at the pains of now and then speaking with them. Having mentioned this several times, Mr. Wesley and his brother Charles, went with him on the 24th of August to the castle, and were so well satisfied with their visit, that they determined to go thither once or twice a week. They had not done this long, before Mr. Morgan, who seems to have led the way in acts of charity and benevolence to others, desired Mr. Wesley to go with him to see a poor woman in the town who was sick. When they began to reflect on the benefit this might be of to the poor, they thought it would be well worth while to spend two or three hours in the week in this species of charity, especially if the minister of the parish in which such person was, did not object to it. But as this practice was quite *new*, and had an appearance of irregularity, on which account it might give offence, Mr. Wesley did not choose to proceed any further without advice. He wrote to his father, who was remarkably attached to regularity and church-order, stating what they had hitherto done, and what their design was; begging to have his opinion whether they had already gone too far? Whether they should stand still where they were, or go forward?

His father's answer is dated September 21, in which he says, "As to your own designs and employments, what can I say less of them than *valde probo;* and that I have the highest reason to bless God, that he has given me two sons together at Oxford, to whom he has given grace and courage to turn the war against the world and the devil, which is the best way to conquer them. They have but one enemy more to combat with, the flesh; which if they take care to subdue by fasting and prayer, there will be no more for them to do, but to proceed steadily in the same course, and expect the crown which fadeth not away. You have reason to bless God, as I do, that you have so fast a friend as Mr. Morgan, who I see in the most difficult service, is ready to break the ice for you.

"I am afraid lest the main objection you make against your going on in the business of the prisoners, may secretly proceed from flesh and blood. For who can harm you if you are followers of that which is so good? And which will be one of the marks by which the Shepherd of Israel will know his sheep at the last day. Though, if it were possible for you to suffer a little in the cause, you would have a confessor's reward. You own that none but such as are out of their senses would be prejudiced against you for acting in this manner. Go on then in God's name in the path to which your Saviour has directed you, and that track wherein your father has gone before

you? For when I was an undergraduate, I visited those in the castle there, and reflect on it with great satisfaction to this day. Walk as prudently as you can, though not fearfully, and my heart and prayers are with you.

"Your first regular step is to consult with him, if any such there be, who has a jurisdiction over the prisoners; and the next is to obtain the direction and approbation of your bishop. This is Monday morning, at which time I shall never forget you.—Accordingly, to him who is every where, I now heartily commit you."

This advice, from a person on whose judgment, experience, and orthodoxy they could depend, gave them courage: it confirmed them in their benevolent purposes, and animated them with zeal in the execution of them. They carefully attended, however, to the prudential directions; and Mr. Wesley immediately consulted Mr. Gerard, the Bishop of Oxford's chaplain, who likewise attended the prisoners when any were condemned to die, for at other times they were left to their own care. He proposed to him their design of serving the prisoners as far as they could, and his own intention of preaching there once a month, if the bishop should approve of it. Mr. Gerard commended the design, and said he would answer for the bishop's approbation, to whom he would take the first opportunity of mentioning it. The bishop being consulted, not only gave his permission, but was highly pleased with the undertaking, and hoped it would have the desired success.

Sheltered by such respectable authority, they thought themselves secure, and prosecuted their design with diligence. But no human authority is sufficient to restrain the overflowings of a mind at enmity with God. The old drones in religion, who retain little of Christianity but the name, think themselves insulted by any extraordinary piety and zeal in young men: and the gay and thoughtless are irritated, because they think their peculiar pleasures and whole manner of life is thereby condemned. Thus the case seems to have stood between these young men and their opponents at Oxford. The opposition increased. The men of wit in Christ Church entered the lists against them, and between mirth and anger, made a pretty many reflections upon the *sacramentarians*, as they were pleased to call them. Their allies of Merton, thought both this and the title of Methodists, too decent, as implying something commendable; they therefore changed it, and honored them with the title of the Holy Club. But most of these being persons of well known characters, they made no proselytes from the sacrament, till a gentleman eminent for learning, and well esteemed for piety, joining them, told his nephew, that if he dared to go to the weekly communion any longer, he would turn him out of doors. This argument had no success; the young gentleman communicated next week. The uncle now became more violent, and shook his nephew by the throat, to convince him more effectually,

that receiving the sacrament every week was founded in error: but this argument appearing to the young gentleman to have no weight in it, he continued his usual practice. This eminent person, so well esteemed for piety, was however indefatigable in his endeavors to suppress it. He now changed the mode of attack, and like a true agent of satan, kept close to the letter of the Apostle's advice, but grossly perverted the spirit of it. By a soft obliging manner towards him, he melted down the young gentleman's resolution of being so strictly religious, and from this time he began to absent himself five Sundays out of six, from the sacrament. This success gave the opposition new strength, and one of the seniors of the college consulting with the doctor, they prevailed with two other young gentlemen to promise they would only communicate three times a year.

The opposition now becoming more serious, by some persons of influence taking so decided a part against them, the two Mr. Wesleys wrote to their father again, stating their situation, and asking further advice. His answer, which is dated December 1, now lies before me.

"This day I received both yours, and this evening, in the course of our reading, I thought I found an answer that would be more proper than any I myself could dictate; though since it will not be easily translated, I send it in the original. *Πολλη μοι Καυχησις υπερ υμων· πεπληρωμαι τη παρακλησει· υπερπερισσευομαι τη χαρα.** What would you be? Would you be angels? I question whether a mortal can arrive to a greater degree of perfection than steadily to do good, and for that very reason patiently and meekly to suffer evil. For my part, on the present view of your actions and designs, my daily prayers are that God would keep you humble: and then I am sure that if you continue to suffer for righteousness' sake, though it be but in a lower degree, the spirit of God and of glory shall in some good measure rest upon you. And you cannot but feel such a satisfaction in your own minds as you would not part with for all the world. Be never weary of well-doing: never look back, for you know the prize and the crown are before you: though I can scarce think so meanly of you, as that you should be discouraged with the crackling of thorns under a pot. Be not high-minded, but fear. Preserve an equal temper of mind under whatever treatment you meet with, from a not very just or well-natured world. Bear no more sail than is necessary, but steer steady. The less you value yourselves for these unfashionable duties (as there is no such thing as works of supererogation) the more all good and wise men will value you, if they see your works are all of a piece; or which is infinitely more, he, by whom actions and intentions are weighed, will both accept, esteem, and reward you.

"I hear my son John has the honor of being styled the father of

* 2 Cor. vii. 4. Great is my glorying of you. I am filled with comfort. I am exceeding joyful.

the Holy Club: if it be so, I am sure I must be grandfather of it; and I need not say, that I had rather any of my sons should be so dignified and distinguished, than to have the title of His Holiness."

In the same letter he advises them to use great mildness towards their persecutors, but at the same time to avoid a mean or sneaking behavior, and rather to show an open manly firmness, which is highly becoming in a mind conscious of acting well.

In answer to this, Mr. Wesley wrote to his father December 11. He says, "We all return you our sincere thanks for your timely and necessary advice; and should be exceedingly glad if it were as easy to follow it, as it is impossible not to approve it. That doubtless is the very point we have to gain, before any other can be managed successfully, to have an habitual lively sense of our being only instruments in his hand, who can do all things either with or without any instrument. But how to fix this sense in us, is the great question.—We hope you and all our friends will continue to intercede for us, to him with whom all things are possible.

"To-morrow night I expect to be in company with the gentleman who did us the honor to take the first notice of our little society. I have terrible reasons to think he is as slenderly provided with humanity as with sense and learning. However, I must not let slip this opportunity, because he is at present in some distress, occasioned by his being obliged to dispute in the schools on Monday; though he is not furnished with such arguments as he wants. I intend, if he has not procured them before, to help him to some arguments, that I may at least remove that prejudice from him, that 'we are friends to none but those who are as queer as ourselves.'"

Under the encouragement of his father's letter they still continued to meet together as usual, and to confirm one another in their pious resolutions. They communicated once a week. They visited the prisoners, and some poor families in the town when they were sick; and that they might have wherewith to relieve their distress, they abridged themselves of all the superfluities and of many of the conveniences of life. They took every opportunity of conversing with their acquaintance in the most useful manner, to awaken in them a sense of religion. But the outcry daily increasing, they thought it proper, by way of self-defence, to propose to their friends or opponents as opportunity offered, these or the like questions:

"1. Whether it does not concern all men of all conditions to imitate him as much as they can, who went about doing good?

Whether all Christians are not concerned in that command, 'While we have time let us do good to all men.'

Whether we shall not be more happy hereafter, the more good we do now?

2. Whether we may not try to do good to our acquaintance among the young gentlemen of the university. Particularly, whether we

may not endeavor to convince them of the necessity of being Christians, and of being scholars?

Whether we may not try to convince them of the necessity of method and industry, in order to either learning or virtue?

Whether we may not try to persuade them to confirm and increase their industry, by communicating as often as they can?

Whether we may not mention to them the authors whom we conceive to have written best on those subjects?

Whether we may not assist them as we are able, from time to time, to form resolutions upon what they read in those authors, and to execute them with steadiness and perseverance?

3. May we not try to do good to those who are hungry, naked, or sick? If we know any necessitous family, may we not give them a little food, clothes, or physic, as they want?

If they can read, may we not give them a Bible, a Common Prayer Book, or a Whole Duty of Man?

May we not inquire, now and then, how they have used them; explain what they do not understand, and enforce what they do?

May we not enforce upon them the necessity of private prayer, and of frequenting the church and sacrament?

May we not contribute what we are able, toward having their children clothed, and taught to read?

4. May we not try to do good to those who are in prison? May we not release such well-disposed persons as remain in prison for small debts?

May we not lend small sums to those who are of any trade, that they may procure themselves tools and materials to work with?

May we not give to them who appear to want it most, a little money, or clothes, or physic?"

It was impossible for any person, who had a grain of either humanity or religion left, to answer these questions in the negative, however averse he might be to practise the duties proposed in them. No one attempted it; but several, when they understood the plan of their designs, increased their little stock of money for the prisoners and the poor, by subscribing something quarterly to it; so that the more persons they proposed their designs to, the more they were confirmed in the belief that they were acting right, and more determined to pursue their plan, notwithstanding the ridicule which increased fast upon them during the winter.

It appears from the questions here proposed, which relate to the students, that Mr. Wesley was not inattentive to their progress in learning, though he endeavored to make them religious. His regular method of study, his diligence, and great care to make his pupils thoroughly understand every thing they read, were admirably adapted to make them scholars. It is indeed universally allowed, that he

was an excellent tutor, and his pupils have in general acknowledged themselves under infinite obligations to him on this account.

This year, Mr. Wesley and his brother Charles, began the practice of conversing together in Latin, whenever they were alone; chiefly with a view of acquiring a facility in expressing themselves in this language, on all occasions, with perspicuity, energy, and elegance. This practice they continued for near sixty years; and with such success, that if their style did not equal, it certainly, on some subjects, approached nearer to the best models of conversation in the Augustan age, than many of the learned have thought it possible to attain.

In the beginning of the year 1731, a meeting was held by several of the seniors of the college, to consult on the speediest way to stop the progress of enthusiasm in it. Mr. Wesley and his friends did not learn what was the result of this very pious consultation; but it was soon publicly reported, that Dr. ——— and the Censors were going to blow up the Godly Club. This was now their common title; though they were sometimes dignified with that of the Enthusiasts, or the Reforming Club.—It is curious to observe, the different modes of attack sometimes made use of, both against persons and doctrines. When the opposers can derive no advantage, either from Scripture or reason, they give bad names to the best things; in order to prejudice the minds of those, who never think for themselves.

As new difficulties arose, Mr. Wesley lost no opportunity of consulting his friends. He now wrote to his brother Samuel, at Westminster; whose answer is dated April—"I designed," says he, "to have written to Mr. Bateman, to whom I read part of your last letter, concerning the execrable consultation in order to stop the progress of religion, by giving it a false name. He lifted up his eyes and hands, and protested he could not have believed such a thing. He gave Mr. Morgan a very good character, and said he should always think himself obliged to him, for the pains he took in reclaiming a young pupil of his, who was just got into ill company, and upon the brink of destruction.—I do not like your being called *a club*, that name is really calculated to do mischief. But the other charge of enthusiasm can weigh with none, but such as drink away their senses, or never had any: for surely activity in social duties, and a strict attendance on the ordained means of grace, are the strongest guards imaginable against it. I called on Dr. Terry, to desire him to subscribe to Job, but did not meet with him at home; in two or three days, *O rem ridiculam et jocosam!* he did me the favor to call upon me. I said, I hope my two brothers have still good characters at Oxford,—he answered he believed they were studious and sober. When he was got down stairs he turned about, and said, I think I have heard your brothers are exemplary and take great pains to instil good principles into young people. I told him, and you may guess I

told him the truth, I was very glad to hear such a character of them, *especially from him.*"—From the last words, it is pretty plain, that Dr. Terry was an avowed opposer of Mr. Wesley and his friends, though he was constrained to bear testimony to the goodness of their characters: but whether he was the grave gentleman who so piously took his nephew by the throat to convert him to his own way of thinking and acting; and who consulted with the censors how to stop the progress of religion among them, is not certain.

In the midst of such opposition, Mr. Wesley thought it prudent to take every method in his power, to prevent the good that was in them from being evil spoken of; and with this view, and to obtain further advice, he wrote in May, to the Rev. Mr. Hoole,* an aged clergyman in his father's neighborhood, of known wisdom and integrity. Part of his answer runs thus:† "As to my own sense of the matter, I confess I cannot but heartily approve of that serious and religious turn of mind that prompts you and your associates to those pious and charitable offices; and can have no notion of that man's religion, or concern for the honor of the university, that opposes you, as far as your design respects the colleges. I should be loth to send a son of mine to any seminary, where his conversation with virtuous young men, whose professed design of meeting together at proper times, was to assist each other in forming good resolutions, and encouraging one another to execute them with constancy and steadiness, was inconsistent with any received maxims or rules of life among the members."

On the 18th of April Mr. Wesley, in company with his brother, set out on foot for Epworth; for they now saved every penny they could, to give it to the poor. They returned to Oxford on the 12th of May, and on the 11th of June he wrote to his father, giving him a very discouraging account of their little society. With respect to their walk he observes, that it was not so pleasant to Oxford as from it, though in one respect more useful. "For it let us see," says he, "that four or five and twenty miles is an easy and safe day's journey in hot weather as well as cold. We have made another discovery too, which may be of some service; that it is easy to read as we walk ten or twelve miles, and that it neither makes us faint nor gives us any other symptom of weariness, more than the mere walking without reading at all.

"Since our return, our little company that used to meet us on a Sunday evening, is shrunk into almost none at all. Mr. Morgan is sick at Holt; Mr. Boyce is at his father's house at Barton; Mr. Kirkham must very shortly leave Oxford, to be his uncle's curate, and a young gentleman of Christ Church, who used to make a fourth, either afraid or ashamed or both, is returned to the ways of the world, and studiously shuns our company. However, the poor at the castle

* Private Diary. † Wesley's Works, vol. xxvi. p. 99.

have still the gospel preached to them, and some of their temporal wants supplied, our little fund rather increasing than diminishing. Nor have we yet been forced to discharge any of the children which Mr. Morgan left to our care: though I wish they too, do not find the want of him; I am sure some of their parents will.

"Some however give us a better prospect; John Whitelamb in particular. I believe with this you will receive some account from himself, how his time is employed. He reads one English, one Latin, and one Greek book alternately; and never meddles with a new one in any of the languages, till he has ended the old one. If he goes on as he has begun, I dare take upon me to say, that by the time he has been here four or five years, there will not be such an one, of his standing in Lincoln-College, perhaps not in the university of Oxford."

But notwithstanding their little company was thus scattered, and they left to stand alone, yet they still pursued their designs of doing as much good as possible, with the same diligence and zeal as before. How few attain to this steadiness of mind in that which is good! Who will support an uniform character in an unfashionable attachment to the duties of religion in every situation, uninfluenced by friends or enemies? Surely none but those who act from principle, who do not consider so much what men say or do, as what judgment God forms of them in every action of life. The present situation of these two young men tried and proved them in this respect, and they stood firm as the beaten anvil to the stroke. Some of their friends however began to think that they carried matters too far, and laid unnecessary burdens on themselves. This subject Mr. Wesley mentions in a letter to his mother of the same date with that mentioned above to his father, giving her at the same time some account of the effects of their journey.

"The motion and sun together," says he, "in our last hundred and fifty miles' walk so thoroughly carried off all our superfluous humors, that we continue perfectly in health, though it is here a very sickly season. And Mr. Kirkham assures us, on the word of a priest and a physician, that if we will but take the same medicine once or twice a year, we shall never need any other to keep us from the gout.—When we were with him, we touched two or three times upon a nice subject, but did not come to any full conclusion. The point debated was, what is the meaning of being 'righteous over much,' or by the more common phrase of, being too strict in religion? and what danger there was of any of us falling into that extreme?

"All the ways of being too righteous or too strict, which we could think of, were these: either the carrying some one particular virtue to so great a height, as to make it clash with some others; or, the laying too much stress on the instituted means of grace, to the neglect of the weightier matters of the law; or, the multiplying prudential means upon ourselves so far, and binding ourselves to the obser-

vance of them so strictly, as to obstruct the end we aimed at by them, either by hindering our advance in heavenly affections in general, or by retarding our progress in some particular virtue. Our opponents seemed to think my brother and I in some danger of being too strict in this last sense; of laying burdens on ourselves too heavy to be borne, and consequently too heavy to be of any use to us.

"It is easy to observe, that almost every one thinks that rule totally needless, which he does not need himself; and as to the christian spirit itself, almost every one calls that degree of it which he does not himself aim at, enthusiasm. If therefore we plead for either (not as if we thought the former absolutely needful, neither as if we had attained the latter) it is no great wonder that they who are not for us in practice should be against us. If you who are a less prejudiced judge, have perceived us faulty in this matter, too superstitious or enthusiastic, or whatever it is to be called; we earnestly desire to be speedily informed of our error, that we may no longer spend our strength on that which profiteth not. Or whatever there may be on the other hand, in which you have observed us to be too remiss, that likewise we desire to know as soon as possible. This is a subject which we would understand with as much accuracy as possible, it being hard to say which is of the worse consequence: the being too strict, the really carrying things too far, the wearying ourselves and spending our strength in burdens that are unnecessary; or the being frightened by those terrible words, from what, if not directly necessary, would at least be useful."

The reader will easily observe that this letter, written to a parent, to whom he often laid open all his heart without the least restraint or disguise, speaks a mind ardently bent on a total devotion to God, and anxious to discover the most excellent way of attaining it. The following letter written in November to his brother Samuel, treats on the same subject he had mentioned to his mother, and discovers his sentiments more at large. It seems Mr. Samuel Wesley had suggested to him, that in his general seriousness, and in one or two other points of behavior, he carried matters too far; that these little things might give a prejudice against other parts of his conduct that were excellent, and of the utmost importance; and that he might relax a little in these smaller matters without injuring his general design. In answer to these remarks of his brother, he says; "Considering the other changes that I remember in myself, I shall not at all wonder if the time comes, when we differ as little in our conclusions as we do now in our premises. In most we seem to agree already; especially as to rising, not keeping much company, and sitting by a fire, which I always do, if any one in the room does, whether at home or abroad. But these are the very things about which others will never agree with me. Had I given up these, or but one of them, rising early, which implies going to bed early (though I never am sleepy now) and

keeping so little company, not one man in ten of those who are offended at me, as it is, would ever open their mouth against any of the other particulars. For the sake of these, those are mentioned; the root of the matter lies here. Would I but employ a third of my money, and about half my time as other folks do, smaller matters would be easily overlooked. But I think, '*Nil tanti est.*' As to my hair, I am much more sure, that what this enables me to do, is according to the Scripture, than I am that the length of it is contrary to it.*

"I have often thought of a saying of Dr. Hayward's when he examined me for priest's orders; 'Do you know what you are about? You are bidding defiance to all mankind. He that would live a christian priest, ought to know, that whether his hand be against every man or no, he must expect every man's hand should be against him.' It is not strange that every man's hand, who is not a Christian, should be against him that endeavors to be so. But is it not hard that even those who are with us should be against us; that a man's enemies, in some degree, should be those of the same household of faith? Yet so it is. From the time that a man sets himself to this business, very many, even of those who travel the same road, many of those who are before as well as behind him, will lay stumbling-blocks in his way. One blames him for not going fast enough, another for having made no greater progress; another for going too far, which perhaps, strange as it is, is the more common charge of the two. For this comes from all people of all sorts; not only infidels, not only half christians, but some of the best of men are very apt to make this reflection, 'he lays unnecessary burdens upon himself; he is too precise; he does what God has no where required to be done.' True, he has not required it of those who are perfect; and even as to those who are not, all men are not required to use all means; but every man is required to use those which he finds most useful to himself. And who can tell better than himself, whether he finds them so or no? Who knoweth the things of a man better than the spirit of a man that is in him?

"This being a point of no common concern, I desire to explain myself upon it once for all, and to tell you freely and clearly, those general positions on which I ground all those practices, for which, as you would have seen had you read that paper through, I am generally accused of singularity. 1st. As to the end of my being; I lay it down for a rule, that I cannot be too happy, or therefore too holy; and thence infer that the more steadily I keep my eye upon the prize

* Mr. Wesley wore his hair remarkably long and flowing on his shoulders. As he was often indisposed, his mother thought it injured his health, and was very desirous that he should have it taken off; "I verily believe," says she in a letter, "you will never have any good state of health, while you keep your hair." He objected against parting with his hair, because it would occasion some increase of his expenses, which he could not afford, without giving less to the poor. His brother Samuel took a middle way, and advised him to have his hair cut shorter; and this advice he followed.

of our high calling, and the more of my thoughts and words and actions are directly pointed at the attainment of it, the better. 2. As to the instituted means of attaining it, I likewise lay it down for a rule, that I am to use them every time I may. 3. As to prudential means, I believe this rule holds of things indifferent in themselves; whatever I know to do me hurt, that to me is not indifferent, but resolutely to be abstained from: whatever I know to do me good, that to me is not indifferent, but resolutely to be embraced.

"But it will be said, I am whimsical. True, and what then? If by *whimsical* be meant simply *singular*, I own it; if singular without any reason, I deny it with both my hands, and am ready to give a reason to any that asks me, of every custom wherein I differ from the world. I grant in many single actions I differ unreasonably from others, but not wilfully; no, I shall extremely thank any one who will teach me how to help it.

"As to my being *formal;* if by that be meant that I am not easy and unaffected enough in my carriage, it is very true; but how shall I help it?—If by formal be meant that I am serious, this too is very true; but why should I help it? Mirth I grant is very fit for you; but does it follow that it is fit for me? Are the same tempers, any more than the same words and actions fit for all circumstances? If you are to rejoice evermore, because you have put your enemies to flight, am I to do the same while they continually assault me? You are very glad, because you are passed from death to life; well, but let him be afraid who knows not whether he is to live or die.—Whether this be my condition or no, who can tell better than myself? Him who can, whoever he be, I allow to be a proper judge, whether I do well to be generally as serious as I can."

December 11. Mr. Samuel Wesley answered this letter, and felt himself a little hurt at some expressions in it; the force of which he endeavored to ward off. Some time afterwards the subject of seriousness was again renewed, and several letters passed between them. At first they seemed to differ in opinion; but when each had explained himself, they were more agreed. Mr. Samuel Wesley closes the debate in the following words: "To the best of my memory your character was but little in my thoughts, and my own not at all, in my late letters. I never designed to justify myself; perhaps my laughter is particularly blameable, as my temper is serious, severe, and melancholy.—Thus ends our notable dispute, or rather we have had none at all. For you are only against excessive laughter, which I was never for; and only for seriousness, which I was never against. There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh. And now methinks each of us may say to the other, as Dick does to Matt—

> "That people lived and died I knew,
> An hour ago, as well as you."

About this time his father came up to London and from thence took an excursion to Oxford, to see what his sons were doing, and in what spirit and temper of mind they did it. On his return to London he wrote to Mrs. Wesley, January the 5th, in which he says; "I had yours on new-year's day, on which I returned in one day from Oxford not very well; but well paid both for my expense and labor, by the shining piety of our two sons, of whom I shall write soon more at large." This, the reader will observe, gives the fullest evidence that the father did not think his sons were carrying matters too far.

Though Mr. Wesley continued with such persevering industry in every means of grace, in acts of self-denial, and in doing good to others to the utmost of his power; yet it was a bare conviction of his duty, and not a gale of passion, that supported him in these laborious exercises; which makes his resolution appear the more extraordinary. When he first set out in this religious course of life, he was fully convinced that he did not possess that state of mind which the gospel speaks of as the privilege of true believers in Christ; he expected that the practice of every duty to the utmost of his power would lead him into this state of mind, and give him peace and joy in God; but he did not find that this effect followed; he was often dull, flat, and unaffected in the use of the most solemn ordinances. This both distressed and perplexed him, so that he seemed at a loss which way to proceed, to obtain the happiness and security he wanted. In this state of perplexity he wrote to his mother on the 28th of February, and after mentioning Mr. Morgan's situation, he observes; "One consideration is enough to make me assent to his and your judgment concerning the holy sacrament; which is, that we cannot allow Christ's human nature to be present in it, without allowing either con—or transubstantiation. But that his Divinity is so united to us then, as he never is but to worthy receivers, I firmly believe, though the manner of that union is utterly a mystery to me.

"That none but worthy receivers should find this effect is not strange to me, when I observe, how small effect many means of improvement have upon an unprepared mind. Mr. Morgan and my brother were affected as they ought, by the observations you made on that glorious subject: but though my understanding approved what was excellent, yet my heart did not feel it. Why was this, but because it was pre-engaged by those affections with which wisdom will not dwell? Because the animal mind cannot relish those truths which are spiritually discerned. Yet I have those writings which the good spirit gave to that end! I have many of those which he hath since assisted his servants to give us: I have retirement to apply these to my own soul daily; I have means both of public and private prayer; and above all, of partaking in that sacrament once a week. What shall I do to make all these blessings effectual? To gain from them that mind which was also in Christ Jesus?

"To all who give signs of their not being strangers to it, I propose this question—and why not to you rather than any?—Shall I quite break off my pursuit of all learning, but what immediately tends to practice? I once desired to make a fair show in languages and philosophy: but it is past; there is a more excellent way, and if I cannot attain to any progress in the one, without throwing up all thoughts of the other, why fare it well! yet a little while and we shall all be equal in knowledge, if we are in virtue.

"You say, 'you have renounced the world.' And what have I been doing all this time? What have I done ever since I was born? Why, I have been plunging myself into it more and more. It is enough: Awake thou that sleepest. Is there not one Lord, one Spirit, one hope of our calling? One way of attaining that hope? Then I am to renounce the world as well as you. That is the very thing I want to do: to draw off my affections from this world and fix them on a better. But how? What is the surest and the shortest way? Is it not to be humble? Surely this is a large step in the way. But the question recurs, how am I to do this? To own the necessity of it, is not to be humble. In many things you have interceded for me and prevailed. Who knows but in this too you may be successful? If you can spare me only that little part of Thursday evening, which you formerly bestowed upon me in another manner, I doubt not but it would be as useful now for correcting my heart, as it was then for forming my judgment.

"When I observe how fast life flies away, and how slow improvement comes, I think one can never be too much afraid of dying before one has learned to live. I mean even in the course of nature. For were I sure that 'the silver cord should not be violently loosed;' that 'the wheel should not be broken at the cistern,' till it was quite worn away by its own motion; yet what a time would this give me for such a work! a moment to transact the business of eternity! What are forty years in comparison of this? So that were I sure of what never man yet was sure of, how little would it alter the case! How justly still might I cry out,

> "'Downward I hasten to my destin'd place;
> There none obtain thy aid, none sing thy praise!
> Soon shall I lie in death's deep ocean drown'd;
> Is mercy there, is sweet forgiveness found?
> O save me yet, while on the brink I stand;
> Rebuke these storms, and set me safe on land.
> O make my longings and thy mercy sure!
> Thou art the God of power.'"

This letter needs no comment; it shows an ardent mind, wholly occupied in pursuit of a saving knowledge of God; but embarrassed and perplexed, not knowing which way to turn, and yet willing to sacrifice the dearest object in life to obtain the end in view.

Mr. Morgan had now been ill more than twelve months; and was so greatly reduced, that he became a burden to himself, and totally useless to others. In this stage of his disease, his understanding sometimes appeared deranged; he became more changeable in his temper than usual, and inconsistent in his conversation. But this was purely the effect of his disease, not the least symptom of the kind having ever appeared, till long after his health had declined.

His father being fully informed of the state of his health, wrote to him in March, and told him that he should no longer be limited in his expenses to any fixed allowance; that such sums as were necessary for his health should be immediately remitted to him; but strongly insisted that no part of it should be given away; that he should lay it out in recreation, medicine, and such other matters as might be necessary for the recovery and support of his health. He then says, "You cannot conceive what a noise that ridiculous society which you are engaged in, has made here. Besides the particulars of the great follies of it at Oxford, which to my great concern I have often heard repeated; it gave me sensible trouble to hear, that you were noted for going into the villages about Holt; calling their children together, and teaching them their prayers and catechism, and giving them a shilling at your departure. I could not but advise with a wise, pious, and learned clergyman: he told me that he has known the worst of consequences follow from such blind zeal; and plainly satisfied me that it was a thorough mistake of true piety and religion. I proposed writing to some prudent and good man at Oxford to reason with you on these points, and to convince you that you were in a wrong way. He said, in a generous mind, as he took yours to be, the admonition and advice of a father would make a deeper impression than all the exhortations of others. He concluded, that you was young as yet, and that your judgment was not come to its maturity; but as soon as your judgment improved, and on the advice of a true friend, you would see the error of your way; and think, as he does, that you may walk uprightly and safely, without endeavoring to out-do all the good bishops, clergy, and other pious and good men of the present and past ages: which God Almighty give you grace and sense to understand aright."

In the month of April Mr. Samuel Wesley visited Oxford, and spent a few days there; no doubt with a view chiefly to satisfy himself on the spot, of the truth or falsehood of the various accounts that were given him of his two brothers. When he returned to London he wrote a hasty poetical epistle to his brother Charles, in which he has clearly expressed his opinion of their conduct, and the views he had formed of their opponents. The latter part of it refers to the unhappy situation of Mr. Morgan.

April 20, 1732.

"Though neither are o'erstock'd with precious time,
If I can write it, you may read my rhyme;
And find an hour to answer I suppose
In verse harmonious or in humble prose;
What I when late at Oxford could not say,
My friends so numerous, and so short my stay.

"Let useless questions first aside be thrown,
Which all men may reply to, or that none:
As whether Doctors doubt the D— will die:
Or F—— still retains his courtesy?
Or J——n dies daily in conceit,
Dies without death, and walks without his feet?
What time the library completes its shell?
What hand revives the discipline of Fell?
What house for learning shall rewards prepare,
Which orators and poets justly share,
And see a second Atterbury there

"Say, does your christian purpose still proceed,
T' assist in every shape the wretches' need?
To free the prisoner from his anxious gaol,
When friends forsake him, and relations fail?
Or yet with nobler charity conspire
To snatch the guilty from eternal fire?
Has your small squadron firm in trial stood,
Without preciseness, singularly good?
Safe march they on 'twixt dangerous extremes
Of mad profaneness and enthusiasts' dreams?
Constant in prayer, while God approves their pains,
His spirit cheers them and his blood sustains?
Unmov'd by pride or anger, can they hear
The foolish laughter, or the envious fleer?
No wonder wicked men blaspheme their care,
The devil always dreads offensive war;
Where heavenly zeal the sons of night pursues,
Likely to gain, and certain not to lose;
The sleeping conscience wakes by dangers near,
And pours the light in, they so greatly fear.

"But hold, perhaps this dry religious toil,
May damp the genius, and the scholar spoil.
Perhaps facetious foes, to meddling fools
Shine in the class, and sparkle in the schools:
Your arts excel, your eloquence outgo,
And soar like Virgil or like Tully flow;
Have brightest turns and deepest learning shown,
And prov'd your wit mistaken by their own.
If not—the wights should moderately rail,
Whose total merit summ'd from far detail
Is, saunt'ring, sleep, and smoke, and wine, and al

"How contraries may meet without design!
And pretty gentlemen and bigots join!
A pert young rake observes with saucy airs,
That none can know the world, who say their pray'rs:
And Rome in middle ages us'd to grant,

The most devout were still most ignorant.
So when old bloody Noll our ruin wrought
Was ignorance the best devotion thought;
His crop-hair'd saints all marks of sense deface,
And preach that learning is a foe to grace:
English was spoke in schools, and Latin ceas'd,
They quite reform'd the language of the beast.

"One or two questions more before I end,
That much concern a brother and a friend.
Does John seem bent beyond his strength to go,
To his frail carcase literally foe?
Lavish of health, as if in haste to die,
And shorten time, t' ensure eternity?
Does M—— weakly think his time misspent?
Of his best actions can he now repent?
Others, their sins with reason just deplore,
The guilt remaining when the pleasure 's o'er;
Since the foundations of the world were laid,
Shall he for virtue first himself upbraid?
Shall he, what most men to their sins deny,
Show pain for alms, remorse for piety?
Can he the sacred Eucharist decline?
What Clement poisons here the bread and wine?
Or does his sad disease possess him whole,
And taint alike his body and his soul?
If to renounce his graces he decree,
O! that he could transfer the stock to me?
Alas! enough what mortal e'er can do,
For him who made him and redeem'd him too?
Zeal may to man beyond desert be show'd,
No supererogation stands to God."——

In April, this year, Mr. Clayton joined their little society, and about the same time Mr. Ingham, Mr. Broughton, Mr. Harvey, and one or two of Mr. John and Charles Wesley's pupils. They were all zealous members of the Church of England; not only tenacious of all her doctrines, as far as they yet understood them, but of all her discipline, to the minutest circumstance. By the advice of Mr. Clayton, they now added to their former practices, a regular observance of the fasts of the church; the general neglect of which, they thought, was by no means a sufficient excuse for neglecting them.

For some years before this, Mr. Wesley had frequently read over, with great attention, Mr. Law's Christian Perfection, and his Serious Call to a Holy Life; and, as his practice was, had made extracts from them. He had conceived a high opinion of the author from his writings, having often been instructed by them. Being in London, in the month of July, he went down to Putney, to pay Mr. Law a visit, which was the introduction to a personal acquaintance with each other. Mr. Wesley occasionally repeated his visits, and a friendly correspondence followed, which lasted several years. From this time, he began to read the *Theologia Germanica*, and other mys-

tic writers, of which, we shall afterwards have occasion to take some notice.

But, though he was pleased, and perhaps too much captivated with the views which *some* of the mystic writers gave him of religion, as consisting chiefly in contemplation, and inward attention to our own mind; it does not appear, that he was less diligent in the instituted means of grace, nor less active in doing good to others than before.—He was now known to many pious and respectable persons in London, who began to take notice of him. He heartily approved of the conduct of those well disposed persons, who associated together, to carry on a plan of suppressing vice, and spreading religion and virtue among the people; and on the 3d of August, was admitted into the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge.*

Mr. Wesley, and those associated with him, now suffered the entire loss of Mr. Morgan, who had been the foremost in promoting their pious endeavors to do good. He left Oxford on the 5th of June, and died in Dublin on the 26th of August. That this is the true time of his death, is evident from a letter of Mr. Morgan the father, to Mr. Charles Wesley, dated September the 5th. He says, "From the intimacy which I understood to have been contracted between you and my dear son, I make no doubt but you must have some concern upon you at the reading the account of his death, as I have the greatest in writing it. His distemper threw him into a fever, of which he

* In the reign of James II. the fear of Popery was so strong, as well as just, that many, in and about London, began to meet often together, both for devotion, and their further instruction. Things of that kind, had been formally practised only among the Puritans, and the Dissenters; but these were of the church, and came to their ministers to be assisted; and were chiefly directed by Dr. Beveridge and Dr. Horneck. After the revolution, in 1688, these societies became more numerous, and for the greater encouragement of devotion, they got such collections to be made, as maintained many clergymen, to read prayers in such a number of places, and at such different hours, that devout persons might have that comfort at every hour of the day. There were constant sacraments every Lord's day in many churches; and there were greater numbers, and greater appearances of devotion, at prayers and sacrament, than had ever been observed in the memory of man. These societies resolved to inform the magistrates of swearers, drunkards, profaners of the Lord's day, and of lewd houses; and they threw in that part of the fine, given by the law to informers, into a stock of charity. From this they were called Societies of Reformation. Some good magistrates encouraged them; others treated them roughly. As soon as Queen Mary heard of this, she encouraged these good designs by her letters and proclamations; and King William afterwards did the same. Other societies set themselves to raise charity-schools for teaching poor children, for clothing them, and binding them out to trades; and many books were printed, and sent over the nation, to be freely distributed. These were called Societies for Propagating Christian Knowledge. At last, a corporation was created by King William, for propagating the gospel among infidels, for setting schools in our plantations, for furnishing the clergy that were sent thither, and for sending missionaries among such of our plantations, as were not able to provide pastors for themselves. It was a glorious conclusion of a reign, that began with preserving our religion, and ended with creating a corporation for promoting it, among infidels, to the remoter parts of the earth. The bishops, and clergy, contributed liberally to it. Upon Queen Anne's accession to the crown, she continued to them the same favor and protection. See Burnet's History of his own Time, vol. v. p. 90, &c.

died the 26th past, about four in the morning. This is the soonest that I could attempt writing any thing about him, since my affliction was consummated.—You see I make very free with you, but the candor and generosity which I have heard you commended for, embolden me to it; and I shall, I hope, find some opportunities to make amends, and beg you will, upon all occasions, let me know, when I can be serviceable to you in this kingdom."

During the course of this summer, Mr. Wesley made two journies to Epworth. In these excursions he often went considerably out of his way, to spend a night, and sometimes two or three, with a friend; most frequently with the parents or relations of some of his pupils. In the first journey, while he was standing on the garden wall at a friend's house, it fell flat under him: but he escaped unhurt. His second journey was in order to meet his brother Samuel, &c., at Epworth, and that the whole family might once more assemble together, before their final separation by death. This meeting must have been very affecting: as their father was growing infirm, and his son Samuel was now going to reside wholly at Tiverton, in Devon, it was not probable they would ever see each other again.—Mr. Wesley returned to Oxford on the 23d of September; and as soon as it was known there that Mr. Morgan was dead, a report was propagated, that the rigorous fasting he had imposed on himself, by the advice of Mr. John and Charles Wesley, had hastened his death. As this report was highly prejudicial to their character, and might hinder their usefulness; and as it was probable it would reach the father, and might afflict him, and prejudice him more deeply against his son's conduct, and the persons with whom he had been connected, Mr. Wesley thought it best to write to him, and state the matter as it really was. His letter is dated the 18th of October, this year.* "The occasion," says he, "of giving you this trouble, is of a very extraordinary nature. On Sunday last I was informed, as no doubt you will be ere long, that my brother and I had killed your son: that the rigorous fasting which he had imposed upon himself by our advice, had increased his illness, and hastened his death. Now, though considering it in itself, *it is a very small thing with me to be judged of man's judgment;* yet as the being thought guilty of so mischievous an imprudence, might make me less able to do the work I came into the world for, I am obliged to clear myself of it, by observing to you, as I have done to others, that your son left off fasting about a year and an half since, and that it is not yet half a year since I began to practise it.

* In all the printed copies of this letter which I have seen, the date is 1730. But in a manuscript, in Mr. Charles Wesley's hand-writing, the date is 1732; which is the true date of it, as appears from Mr. Morgan's account of his son's death. The true date may be collected from the letter itself, compared with Mr. John Wesley's short history of Methodism, which fixes the time when they became acquainted with Mr. Clayton.

"I must not let this opportunity slip of doing my part towards giving you a juster notion of some other particulars, relating both to him and myself, which have been industriously misrepresented to you.

"In March last he received a letter from you, which not being able to read, he desired me to read to him; several of the expressions I perfectly remember, and shall do, till I too am called hence.—In one practice for which you blamed your son, I am only concerned as a friend, not as a partner. Your own account of it was in effect this: 'He frequently went into poor people's houses about Holt, called their children together and instructed them in their duty to God, their neighbor and themselves. He likewise explained to them the necessity of private as well as public prayer, and provided them with such forms as were best suited to their several capacities; and being well apprized how the success of his endeavors depended on their good will towards him, he sometimes distributed among them a little of that money which he had saved from gaming and other fashionable expenses of the place.'——This is the first charge against him, and I will refer it to your own judgment, whether it be fitter to have a place in the catalogue of his faults or of those virtues for which he is now numbered among the sons of God.

"If all the persons concerned in that ridiculous society, whose follies you have so often heard repeated, could but give such a proof of their deserving the glorious title which was once bestowed upon them, they would be contented that their lives too should be counted madness, and their end thought to be without honor. But the truth is, their title to holiness stands upon much less stable foundations; as you will easily perceive when you know the ground of this wonderful outcry, which it seems England itself is not wide enough to contain."

He then gives Mr. Morgan a short history of their little society, informing him what their practices were, and of their care to consult wise, learned, and pious clergymen, in every step they had taken, in the manner described above. He subjoins, "As for the names of Methodists, Supererogation men, and so on, with which some of our neighbors are pleased to compliment us, we do not conceive ourselves to be under any obligation to regard them, much less to take them for arguments. To the law and to the testimony we appeal, whereby we ought to be judged. If by these it can be proved we are in an error, we will immediately and gladly retract it: if not, we have not so learned Christ, as to renounce any part of his service, though men should say all manner of evil against us, with more judgment, and as little truth as hitherto. Your son already stands before the judgment seat of him who judges righteous judgment; at the brightness of whose presence the clouds remove; his eyes are open and he sees clearly whether it was 'blind zeal and a thorough mistake of true

religion that hurried him on in the error of his way,' or whether he acted like a faithful and wise servant, who from a just sense that his time was short, made haste to finish his work before his Lord's coming, that when 'laid in the balance he might not be found wanting.'"

This well timed letter, containing a simple narrative of facts, fully satisfied Mr. Morgan, and gave him a better opinion of the society with which his son had been connected. His answer, which is dated November 25, shows him to have been a man of moderation and a friend to piety. It is as follows. "Your favor of the 20th past was delayed in its passage, I believe by contrary winds, or it had not been so long unanswered. I give entire credit to every thing and every fact you relate. It was ill-judged of my poor son to take to fasting with regard to his health, which I knew nothing of, or I should have advised him against it. He was inclined to piety and virtue from his infancy. I must own I was much concerned at the strange accounts which were spread here, of some extraordinary practices of a religious society which he had engaged in at Oxford, which you may be sure lost nothing in the carriage, lest through his youth and immaturity of judgment, he might be hurried into zeal and enthusiastic notions that would prove pernicious. But now indeed, that piety and holiness of life which he practised, affords me some comfort in the midst of my affliction for the loss of him; having full assurance of his being for ever happy. The good account you are pleased to give of your own and your friend's conduct in point of duty and religious offices, and the zealous approbation of them by the good old gentleman your father, signified in a manner and style becoming the best of men, reconciles and recommends that method of life to me, and makes me almost wish that I were one amongst you. I am very much obliged to you, for the great pains you have been at in transcribing so long and so particular an account for my perusal, and shall be always ready to vindicate you from any calumny or aspersion that I shall hear cast upon you. I am much obliged for your and your brother's great civilities and assistances to my dearest son: I thank — the author of those lines you sent me, for the regard he has shown to his memory. If ever I can be serviceable to any of you in this kingdom, I beg you will let me know."

A correspondence took place between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Morgan, and the year following Mr. Morgan sent the only son he now had, to Oxford, and placed him under Mr. Wesley's care; which was the strongest proof he could possibly give, that he approved of his conduct.

During the two last years, Mr. Wesley made frequent excursions to London, and different parts of the country, besides his journies to Epworth, and the places he visited in his way thither and back, all of which he performed on foot. He observes in his Diary, that he had

walked about 1050 miles; I suppose he means within the year he is speaking of. In these excursions he constantly preached on the Lord's-day, if he had an opportunity; so that he might now be called, in some sort, an itinerant preacher, though on a plan very different from that which he afterwards adopted, and of which he could not at this time have the most distant conception.

By reading Mr. Law's Christian Perfection, and his Serious Call to a Holy Life, he was confirmed in the views he before had of the effects the gospel is intended to produce on the minds of those who sincerely embrace it; and was fully convinced of the absurdity and danger of being an half christian. On the 1st of January, 1733, he preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, before the university, on the circumcision of the heart. In this discourse, which is printed in the second volume of his sermons, he has explained with great clearness, and energy of language, his views of the christian salvation to be attained in this life; in which he never varied, in any material point, to the day of his death. He was indeed, at this time, almost wholly ignorant of the gospel method of attaining this salvation, but he sought it with his whole heart, according to the knowledge he then had, and was willing to sacrifice the dearest thing he had in the world, for the attainment of it.

His father was now in a bad state of health, and seemed declining apace. On this account he set out on horseback for Epworth, in the beginning of January. As he was passing over the bridge beyond Daintry, his horse fell over it with him; but he again escaped unhurt. When the events of life glide smoothly on, and follow certain previous circumstances in regular succession, we see nothing wonderful in them, because there seems to be some common principle on which the succession depends. But in extraordinary deliverances from danger, and in many other instances of human affairs, we plainly perceive, there is no such principle, which connects the previous circumstances with the following event: the interposition of Providence, almost stands visible before our eyes, and a strong conviction of it takes place in the mind, which nothing but inattention or false reasoning can obliterate. On these occasions Mr. Wesley did not fail to return God the tribute of praise and thanksgiving, and renewed his diligence in serving him.

The state of his father's health occasioned his parents to turn their thoughts to the means of obtaining the living of Epworth for him, in case of his father's demise. The thing was mentioned to him when he was now with them, but he seems to have given them little answer. After his return to Oxford, in February, he wrote to his mother on the subject. "You observe," says he, "when I was with you, that I was very indifferent as to the having or not having the living of Epworth. I was indeed utterly unable to determine either way; and that for this reason: I know, if I could stand my ground

here, and approve myself a faithful minister of our blessed Jesus, by honor and dishonor, through evil report and good report; then there would not be a place under the heaven like this, for improvement in every good work. But whether I can stem the torrent which I saw then, but see now much more, rolling down from all sides upon me, that I know not. It is true, there is one who can yet, either command the great water-flood that it shall not come nigh me, or make a way for his redeemed to pass through. But then something must be done on my part: and should he give me, even that most equitable condition, 'according to thy faith be it unto thee,' yet how shall I fulfil it? Why he will look to that too. My father and you helping together with your prayers, that our faith fail us not."

The difficulties which Mr. Wesley foresaw, did not arise from any new persecution which threatened him, but from the danger of unsteadiness in the young gentlemen, who had for some time met with him. He easily perceived, that unless he could overcome this difficulty, there was but little prospect of doing any lasting good in his present situation. And it must be confessed, that, though his practice gives the most convincing evidence of his integrity, disinterestedness, and sincere desire to serve God, yet, there were few young men who had sufficient resolution to persevere therein. His frequent absence too, could have no good influence upon them, as his own example, regularity, steadiness, and advice, were the principal means of preserving them in the same disposition with himself. But it seems that he did not attend to this circumstance at present; for in May, he set out again for Epworth, and took Manchester in his way to see his friend Mr. Clayton, who had now left Oxford. From thence he proceeded to Epworth, and returned to Manchester on Saturday the 2d of June. The next day he preached three times, once at the Old Church, again in Salford, and at St. Anne's. When he reached Oxford, he perceived the bad effects of his absence upon his pupils, and the members of their little society. He now found himself surrounded with enemies triumphing over him, and friends deserting him; he saw the fruits of his labors in danger of being blasted before they had attained maturity. But he stood firm as a rock, and being conscious of his own integrity, that he had nothing in view but to serve God in righteousness and true holiness, and to benefit his neighbor, he viewed his situation without any great emotion: no gusts of passion rose to cloud his understanding, no fear to damp his zeal; he was enabled to say, the Eternal God is my refuge, I will not fear. He wrote to his father in the simplicity and fulness of his heart; and this letter shows the man, and his manner of viewing difficulties, infinitely better than any description which another can give of him.

This letter is dated the 13th of June, and runs thus: "The effects of my last journey I believe will make me more cautious of staying any time from Oxford for the future; at least till I have no pupils to

take care of, which probably will be within a year or two. One of my young gentlemen told me at my return, that he was more and more afraid of singularity: another, that he had read an excellent piece of Mr. Locke's, which had convinced him of the mischief of regarding authority. Both of them agreed, that the observing of Wednesday as a fast, was an unnecessary singularity: the Catholic church (that is, the majority of it) having long since repealed by contrary custom, the injunction she formerly gave concerning it. A third who could not yield to this argument, has been convinced by a fever, and Dr. Frewin. Our seven and twenty communicants at St. Mary's, were on Monday shrunk to five: and the day before, the last of Mr. Clayton's pupils, who continued with us, informed me, that he did not design to meet us any more.

"My ill success, as they call it, seems to be what has frightened every one away from a falling house. On Sunday I was considering the matter a little more nearly; and imagined that all the ill consequences of my singularity, were reduceable to three; diminution of fortune, loss of friends, and of reputation. As to my fortune, I well know, though perhaps others do not, that I could not have borne a larger than I have: and as for that most plausible excuse for desiring it, 'While I have so little I cannot do the good I would;' I ask, can you do the good God would have you do? It is enough. Look no further.—For friends, they were either trifling or serious: if triflers, fare them well; a noble escape: if serious, those who are more serious are left, whom the others would rather have opposed than forwarded in the service they have done, and still do us. If it be said, but these may leave you too; for they are no firmer than the others were. First, I doubt that fact; but next, suppose they should, we hope then they would only teach us a nobler and harder lesson, than any they have done hitherto: It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in man. And as for reputation, though it be a glorious instrument of advancing our Master's service, yet there is a better than that, a *clean heart*, a single eye, a soul full of God! A fair exchange, if by the loss of reputation we can purchase the lowest degree of purity of heart! We beg my mother and you would not cease to work together with us, that whatever we lose, we may gain this: and that having tasted of this good gift, we may count all things else but dung and dross in comparison of it."

Mr. Wesley now redoubled his diligence with his pupils, that he might recover the ground he had lost. His pupils indeed continued with him whether they adopted his religious practices or no. But as he had been blamed for singularity, both by friends and enemies, and many had thought that he too rigorously imposed some particular practices upon others; he informs his mother what the singularity was, which chiefly gave offence at Oxford, and explains the methods he made use of with his pupils, to instruct them in the things of God.

This letter is dated August the 17th; "The thing," says he, "that gives offence here is, the being singular with regard to time, expense, and company. This is evident beyond exception from the case of Mr. Smith, one of our Fellows; who no sooner began to husband his time, to retrench unnecessary expenses, and to avoid his irreligious acquaintance, but he was set upon, by, not only all these acquaintance, but many others too, as if he had entered into a conspiracy to cut all their throats: though to this day he has not advised any single person, unless in a word or two and by accident, to act as he did in any of those instances.

"It is true indeed, that 'the devil hates offensive war most, and that whoever tries to rescue more than his own soul from his hands, will have more enemies, and meet with greater opposition, than if he was content with, having his own life for a prey.' That I try to do this, is likewise certain: but I cannot say whether I 'rigorously impose any observances on others,' till I know what that phrase means. What I do is this. When I am intrusted with a person who is first to understand and practise, and then to teach the law of Christ, I endeavor by an intermixture of reading and conversation, to show him what that law is; that is, to renounce all unsubordinate love of the world, and to love and obey God with all his strength. When he appears seriously sensible of this, I propose to him the means God hath commanded him to use, in order to that end; and a week or a month or a year after, as the state of his soul seems to require it, the several prudential means recommended by wise and good men. As to the times, order, measure, and manner, wherein these are to be proposed, I depend upon the Holy Spirit to direct me, in and by my own experience and reflection, joined to the advices of my religious friends here and elsewhere. Only two rules it is my principle to observe in all cases; first, to begin, continue, and end all my advices in the spirit of meekness: as knowing that the wrath or severity of man worketh not the righteousness of God; and secondly, to add to meekness long-suffering: in pursuance of a rule which I fixt long since, 'never to give up any one till I have tried him, at least ten years; how long hath God had pity on thee?'

"If the wise and good will believe those falsehoods which the bad invent, because I endeavor to save myself and my friends from them, then I shall lose my reputation, even among them, for (though not perhaps good, yet) the best actions I ever did in my life. This is the very case. I try to act as my Lord commands: ill men say all manner of evil of me, and good men believe them. There is a way, and there is but one, of making my peace; God forbid I should ever take it. I have as many pupils as I need, and as many friends: when more are better for me, I shall have more. If I have no more pupils after these are gone from me, I shall then be glad of a curacy near you; if I have, I shall take it as a signal that I am to remain

here. Whether here or there, my desire is to know and feel that I am nothing, that I have nothing, and that I can do nothing. For whenever I am empty of myself, then know I of a surety, that neither friends nor foes, nor any creature, can hinder me from being filled with all the fulness of God. Let not my father's, or your prayers be ever slack in behalf of your affectionate son."

On the 21st of September this year, Mr. Wesley began the practice of reading as he travelled on horseback; and this practice he continued near forty years, till his infirmities obliged him to travel in a carriage. His frequent journies, often on foot as well as on horseback, and the great and constant labor of preaching, reading, visiting, &c. wherever he was, with hard study and a very abstemious diet, had now very much affected his health. His strength was greatly reduced, and he had frequent returns of spitting of blood. In the night of the 16th of July, he had a return of it in such quantity as waked him out of sleep. The sudden and unexpected manner of its coming on, with the solemnity of the night season, made eternity seem near. He cried to God; "O! prepare me for thy coming, and come when thou wilt."* His friends began to be alarmed for his safety, and his mother wrote two or three letters blaming him for the general neglect of his health. He now took the advice of a physician or two, and by proper care and a prudent management of his daily exercise, he gradually lost his complaints, and recovered his strength.

Towards the end of this year, he turned his thoughts to a subject of vast importance in Christian experience; the presence of God with his people. But he found it too great for him to comprehend. He talked with Mr. Law, and wrote to his mother upon it; but he received little or no information from either of them. They all seem to have inquired into the nature and manner of the Divine Presence, rather than into the evidences of it. His mother's answer is dated January 1, 1734: she confesses that she did not understand the subject, and that, in this respect, she still worshipped an unknown God. Nothing indeed is more certain than this, that the *manner* of the Divine Presence and operations, both in the works of nature and grace is incomprehensible to us, at the same time that the effects produced, demonstrate his presence and power. Through the want of this distinction, many have run into great errors in explaining the influence of Divine grace on the human mind, and some have even denied it: though to him who rightly understands the Scriptures, and has any degree of christian experience, the effects of it as clearly demonstrate a Divine influence, as the works of nature show the existence of God, though the manner of his presence and operation in both is inexplicable.

The whole force of Mr. Wesley's mind was now bent on religious subjects. In reflecting on the progress of the soul to an entire con-

* Private Diary.

formity to the will of God and a fitness for heaven, he thought that different degrees of virtue are different states of mind; that is, of the understanding, will, and affections; and that we must pass through the lower states before we can arrive at the higher; so that christian experience is a progressive work; in which the first step prepares the mind for the second, and so on through the whole of our progress. He observed, however, that there are certain states of mind which are more strongly marked than others; and that these states ascertain our progress with some degree of certainty. He wrote to his mother on this subject. She answered him in a letter of January, "You are entirely in the right in what you say in the second paragraph of your letter. The different degrees of virtue and piety are different states of soul, which must be passed through gradually—for, in all matters of religion, if there be not an internal sense in the hearer corresponding to the sense in the mind of the speaker; what is said will have no effect: this I have often experienced: yet sometimes it falls out, that while a zealous Christian is discoursing on spiritual subjects, the blessed Spirit of God will give such light to the minds of those who hear him, as dispels their native darkness, and enables them to apprehend those spiritual things of which before they had no discernment." In this letter she addresses a pupil of Mr. Wesley's, who appears to have despised religion. "Tell him from me," says she, "I am as good as my word, I daily pray for him, and beg of him if he have the least regard for his soul, or have yet any remaining sense of religion in his mind, to shake off all acquaintance with the profane and irregular; for it is the freethinker and sensualist, not the despised Methodist, who will be ashamed and confounded when summoned to appear before the face of that Almighty Judge, whose godhead they have blasphemed, and whose offered mercy they despised and ludicrously rejected. The pleasures of sin are but for a short uncertain time, but eternity hath no end. Therefore one would think that few arguments might serve to convince a man who has not lost his senses, that it is of the last importance for us to be very serious in improving the present time, and acquainting ourselves with God while it is called *to-day;* lest being disqualified for his blissful presence, our future existence be inexpressibly miserable."

Mr. Wesley, and those associated with him, were not only zealous of good works before men, but they were severe and strict in examining themselves in the closet. Each had a string of questions, by which he examined both his actions and his motives in performing them, and also the temper of his mind on every occasion that occurred. It would be too long to insert their whole scheme of self-examination, as is related to every part of duty: I shall therefore only give a specimen of it, in the love of man.

1. Have I embraced every probable opportunity of doing good, and of preventing, removing, or lessening evil? 2. Have I thought any

thing too dear to part with, to serve my neighbor? 3. Have I spent an hour at least, every day, in speaking to some one or other? 4. Have I, in speaking to a stranger, explained what religion is not (not negative, not external) and what it is, the recovery of the image of God; searched at what step in it he stops, and what makes him stop? 5. Have I persuaded all I could to attend public prayers, sermons, and sacraments? and in general, to obey the laws of the Church universal, the Church of England, the state, the university, and their respective colleges? 6. Have I, after every visit, asked him who went with me, did I say any thing wrong? 7. Have I, when any one asked advice, directed and exhorted him, with all my power? 8. Have I rejoiced with and for my neighbor, in virtue, or pleasure? Grieved with him in pain, and for him in sin? 9. Has good will been, and appeared to be, the spring of all my actions towards others? &c. &c. for their scheme of self-examination extended to a very considerable length.

His father's health had been on the decline for several years, and he now seemed approaching towards the close of life. The old gentleman, conscious of his situation, and desirous that the living of Epworth should remain in the family, wrote to his son John, requesting him to apply for the next presentation. We have already seen, that, when the subject was mentioned to him last year, he hesitated, and could not determine one way or the other. But now he was determined not to accept of the living, if he could obtain it, and stated to his father, some reasons for refusing to comply with his request. His father and brother Samuel were disappointed, and both attacked him, with every argument they could possibly bring to bear upon him. He acted on the defensive only, and maintained his ground. But the mode of attack, and of his defence, will give us the best view of his principles and disposition of mind at this time.

His father's letter is dated Nov. 20th, and runs as follows: "Your state of the question, and only argument is: 'The question is not whether I could do more good to others, *there* or *here;* but whether I could do more good to myself; seeing wherever I can be most holy to myself, there I can most promote holiness in others. But I can improve myself more at Oxford, than at any other place.'

"To this I answer, 1. It is not dear self, but the glory of God, and the different degrees of promoting it, which should be our main consideration, and direction in any course of life. Witness St. Paul and Moses. 2. Supposing you could be more holy yourself at Oxford, how does it follow that you could more promote holiness in others, *there* than *elsewhere?* Have you found many instances of it, after so many years' hard pains and labor? Further, I dare say, you are more modest and just than to say, there are no holier men than you at Oxford; and yet it is possible they may not have promoted holiness more than you have done: as I doubt not but you might have done

it much more, had you have taken the right method. For there is a particular turn of mind for these matters: great prudence as well as great fervor.

"3. I cannot allow austerity, or fasting, considered by themselves, to be proper acts of holiness, nor am I for a solitary life. God made us for a social life; we are not to bury our talents; we are to let our light shine before men, and that not barely through the chinks of a bushel, for fear the wind should blow it out. The design of lighting it was, that it might give light to all that went into the house of God. And to this, academical studies are only preparatory.

"4. You are sensible what figures those make, who stay in the university till they are superannuated. I cannot think drowsiness promotes holiness. How commonly do they drone away their life, either in a college, or in a country parsonage, where they can only give God the snuffs of them, having nothing of life or vigor left to make them useful in the world.

"5. We are not to fix our eye on one single point of duty, but to take in the complicated view of all the circumstances in every state of life that offers. Thus in the case before us, put all the circumstances together: if you are not indifferent whether the labors of an aged father for above forty years in God's vineyard be lost, and the fences of it trodden down and destroyed; if you consider that Mr. M. must, in all probability, succeed me, if you do not, and that the prospect of that mighty Nimrod's coming hither shocks my soul, and is in a fair way of bringing down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave: if you have any care for our family, which must be dismally shattered as soon as I am dropt; if you reflect on the dear love and longing which this poor people has for you, whereby you will be enabled to do God the more service, and the plenteousness of the harvest, consisting of near two thousand souls, whereas you have not many more scholars in the university; you may perhaps alter your mind, and bend your will to his, who has promised, if in all our ways we acknowledge him, he will direct our paths."

The old gentleman wrote to his son Samuel on the subject, who warmly took part with his father, and wrote to his brother at Oxford in December, 1734. "Yesterday," says he, "I received a letter from my father, wherein he tells me, you are unalterably resolved not to accept of a certain living if you could get it. After this declaration, I belive no one can move your mind but him who made it. I shall not draw the saw of controversy, and, therefore, though I judge every proposition flatly false, except that of your being assured, yet I shall allow every word, and have nevertheless this to say against your conclusions, 1. I see your love to yourself, but your love to your neighbor I do not see. 2. You are not at liberty to resolve against undertaking a cure of souls. You are solemnly engaged to do it, before God, and his high priest and his church. Are you not ordained?

Did you not deliberately and openly promise to instruct, to teach, to admonish, to exhort those committed to your charge? Did you equivocate then with so vile a reservation, as to purpose in your heart that you never would have any so committed? It is not a college, it is not an university, it is the *order of the Church*, according to which you were called. Let Charles, if he is silly enough, vow never to leave Oxford, and therefore avoid orders. Your faith is already plighted to the contrary; you have put your hand to the plough, to that plough."—This is strong language, and the argument, if good, was like playing heavy cannon upon his brother. Mr. John Wesley, however, kept himself within his fortress, and answered his brother Samuel with caution. His letter is dated January 15th, 1735, and having explained himself at some length to his father, he sent a copy of that letter to his brother. He observes, "Had not my brother Charles desired it might be otherwise, I should have sent you only an extract of the following letter. But if you will be at the pains, you will soon reduce the argument of it, to two or three points, which, if to be answered at all, will be easily answered. By it you may observe, my present purpose is founded on my present weakness. But it is not indeed probable, that my father should live till that weakness is removed.

"Your second argument I had no occasion to mention before. To it I answer, that I do not, nor ever did, resolve against undertaking a cure of souls. There are four cures belonging to our college, and consistent with a fellowship: I do not know but I may take one of them at Michaelmas. Not that I am clearly assured, that I should be false to my engagement were I only to instruct and exhort the pupils committed to my charge. But of that I should think more."

Though the letter to his father is long, yet it contains such a distinct view of his manner of thinking and reasoning, and of the energy of his language, at this period, that it cannot with propriety be omitted.

"Dear Sir,

"1st, The authority of a parent, and the call of Providence, are things of so sacred a nature, that a question in which these are any ways concerned, deserves the most serious consideration. I am therefore greatly obliged to you for the pains you have taken to set ours in a clear light; which I now intend to consider more at large, with the utmost attention of which I am capable. And I shall the more cheerfully do it, as being assured of your joining with me in earnestly imploring his guidance, who will not suffer those that bend their wills to his, to seek death in the error of their life.

"2d. I entirely agree, that 'the glory of God, and the different degrees of promoting it, are to be our sole consideration and direction in the choice of any course of life;' and, consequently, that it must wholly turn upon this single point, whether I am to prefer a college life, or that of a rector of a parish. I do not say the glory of

God is to be my first, or my principal consideration, but my only one: since all that are not implied in this, are absolutely of no weight; in presence of this, they all vanish away, they are less than the small dust of the balance.

"3d. And, indeed, till all other considerations were set aside, I could never come to any clear determination; till my eye was single, my whole mind was full of darkness. Every consideration distinct from this, threw a shadow over all the objects I had in view, and was such a cloud as no light could penetrate. Whereas, so long as I can keep my eye single, and steadily fixed on the glory of God, I have no more doubt of the way wherein I should go, than of the shining of the sun at noon-day.

"4th. That course of life tends most to the glory of God, wherein we can most promote holiness in ourselves and others. I say in ourselves and others, as being fully persuaded that these can never be put asunder. For how is it possible that the good God should make our interest inconsistent with our neighbor's? That he should make our being in one state best for ourselves, and our being in another best for the church? This would be making a strange schism in his body; such as surely never was from the beginning of the world. And if not, then whatever state is best on either of these accounts, is so on the other likewise. If it be best for others, then it is so for us; if for us, then for them.

"5th. However, when two ways of life are proposed, I should choose to begin with that part of the question, which of these have I rational ground to believe will conduce most to my own improvement. And that not only because it is every physician's concern to heal himself first, but because it seems we may judge with more ease, and perhaps certainty too, in which state we can most promote holiness in ourselves, than in which we can in others.

"6th. By holiness, I mean not fasting, or bodily austerity, or any other external means of improvement, but the inward temper, to which all these are subservient, a renewal of the soul in the image of God. I mean a complex habit of lowliness, meekness, purity, faith, hope, and the love of God and man. And I therefore believe that, in the state wherein I am, I can most promote this holiness in myself, because I now enjoy several advantages, which are almost peculiar to it.

"7th. The first of these, is daily converse with my friends. I know no other place under heaven where I can have always at hand half a dozen persons nearly of my own judgment, and engaged in the same studies. Persons who are awakened into a full and lively conviction, that they have only one work to do upon earth; who are in some measure enlightened so as to see, though at a distance, what that one work is, viz. the recovery of that single intention and pure affection which were in Christ Jesus: who, in order to this, have,

according to their power, renounced themselves, and wholly and absolutely devoted themselves to God: and who suitably thereto deny themselves, and take up their cross daily. To have such a number of such friends constantly watching over my soul, and according to the variety of occasions, administering reproof, advice, or exhortation, with all plainness and all gentleness, is a blessing I have not yet found any Christians to enjoy in any other part of the kingdom. And such a blessing it is, so conducive, if faithfully used, to the increase of all holiness, as I defy any one to know the full value of, till he receives his full measure of glory.

"8th. Another invaluable blessing which I enjoy here in a greater degree than I could anywhere else, is retirement. I have not only as much, but as little company as I please. I have no such thing as a trifling visitant, except about an hour in a month, when I invite some of the fellows to breakfast. Unless at that one time, no one ever takes it into his head to set foot within my door, except he has some business of importance to communicate to me, or I to him. And even then, as soon as he has dispatched his business, he immediately takes his leave.

"9th. Both these blessings, the continual presence of useful, and uninterrupted freedom from trifling acquaintance, are exceedingly endeared to me, whenever I have spent but one week out of this place. The far greatest part of the conversation I meet with abroad, even among those whom I believe to be real Christians, turns on points that are absolutely wide of my purpose, that no way forward me in the business of life. Now, though they may have time to spare, I have none; it is absolutely necessary for such a one as me to follow with all possible care and vigilance, that excellent advice of Mr. Herbert,

> 'Still let thy mind be bent, still plotting where,
> And when, and how, the business may be done.'

And this, I bless God, I can in some measure do, so long as I avoid that bane of piety, the company of good sort of men, lukewarm Christians (as they are called,) persons that have a great concern for, but no sense of religion. But these undermine insensibly all my resolutions, and quite steal from me the little fervor I have; and I never come from among these saints of the world (as J. Valdesso calls them,) faint, dissipated and shorn of all my strength, but I say, 'God deliver me from a half Christian.'

"10th. Freedom from care I take to be the next greatest advantage to freedom from useless, and therefore hurtful company. And this too I enjoy in greater perfection here than I can ever expect to do any where else. I hear of such a thing as the cares of this world, and I read of them, but I know them not. My income is ready for me on so many stated days, and all I have to do is to count and carry it home. The grand article of my expense is food, and this too is provided without any care of mine. I have nothing to do, but at such

an hour to take and eat what is prepared for me. My laundress, barber, &c. are always ready at quarter-day, so I have no trouble on account of those expenses. And for what I occasionally need, I can be supplied from time to time without any expense of thought. Now to convince me what a help to holiness this is (were not my experience abundantly sufficient) I should need no better authority than St. Paul's, 'I would have you be without carefulness.' This I speak for your own profit, that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction. Happy is he that careth only for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord. He may be holy both in body and spirit, after the Apostle's judgment, and I think that he had the spirit of God.

"11th. To quicken me in making a thankful and diligent use of all the other advantages of this place, I have the opportunity of public prayer twice a day and of weekly communicating. It would be easy to mention many more, and likewise to show many disadvantages, which a person of greater courage and skill than me, could scarce separate from a country life. But whatever one of experience and resolution might do, I am very sensible I should not be able to turn aside one of the thousand temptations that would immediately rush upon me. I could not stand my ground, no not for one month, against intemperance in sleeping, eating, and drinking; against irregularity in study, against a general lukewarmness in my affections, and remissness in my actions; against softness and self-indulgence, directly opposite to that discipline and hardship which become a soldier of Jesus Christ. And then, when my spirit was thus dissolved, I should be an easy prey to whatever impertinent company came in my way. Then would the cares of the world, and the desire of other things roll back with a full tide upon me. It would be no wonder, if, while I preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away. I cannot therefore but observe, that the question does not relate barely to degrees of perfection, but to the very essence and being of it. *Agitur de vita et sanguine Turni.* The point is, whether I shall, or shall not, work out my salvation, whether I shall serve Christ, or Belial.

"12th. What still heightens my fear of this untried state is, that when I am once entered into it, be the inconveniences of it found more or less—*vestigia nulla retrorsum*—when I am there, there I must stay. If this way of life should ever prove less advantageous, I have almost continual opportunities of quitting it; but whatever difficulties occur in that, whether foreseen or unforeseen, there is no returning, any more than from the grave. When I have once launched out into that unknown sea, there is no recovering my harbor; I must on among whatever whirlpools, or rocks, or sands, though all the waves and storms go over me.

"13th. Thus much as to myself. But you justly observe, that we are not to consider ourselves alone; since God made us all for a

social life, to which academical studies are only preparatory. I allow too that he will take an exact account of every talent which he has lent us, not to bury them, but to employ every mite we have received, in diffusing holiness all around us. I cannot deny that every follower of Christ is, in his proportion, the light of the world, but whoever is such can no more be concealed than the sun in the midst of heaven; that being set as a light in a dark place, his shining out must be the more conspicuous; that to this very end was his light given, that it might shine at least to all that look towards him; and indeed that there is one only way of hiding it, which is, to put it out. Neither can I deny, that it is the indispensable duty of every Christian to impart both light and heat to all who are willing to receive it. I am obliged likewise, unless I lie against the truth, to grant that there is not so contemptible an animal upon earth, as one that drones away life, without ever laboring to promote the glory of God, and the good of men; and that whether he be young or old, learned or unlearned, in a college, or out of it. Yet granting the superlative degree of contempt to be on all accounts due to a college drone; a wretch that hath received ten talents, and yet employs none; that is not only promised a reward by his gracious master, but is paid beforehand for his work by his generous founder, and yet works not at all; allowing all this, and whatever else can be said (for I own it is impossible to say enough) against the drowsy ingratitude, the lazy perjury of those who are commonly called harmless or good sort of men (a fair proportion of whom I must to our shame confess are to be found in colleges,) allowing this, I say, I do not apprehend it will conclude against a college life in general. For the abuse of it does not destroy the use; though there are some here who are the lumber of the creation, it does not follow that others may not be of more service to the world in this station, than they could in any other.

"14th. That I in particular could, might, it seems, be inferred from what has been proved already, viz., That I could be holier here myself than anywhere else, if I faithfully used the blessings I enjoy; for to prove, that the holier any man is himself, the more shall he promote holiness in others, there needs no more than this one *postulatum*, the help which is done on earth, God does it himself. If so, if God be the sole agent in healing souls, and man only the instrument in his hand, there can no doubt be made, but that the more holy a man is, he will make use of him the more. Because he is more willing to be so used; because the more pure he is, he is the fitter instrument for the God of purity; because he will pray more, and more earnestly that he may be employed, and that his service may tend to his Master's glory; because all his prayers both for employment and success therein will the more surely pierce the clouds; because the more his heart is enlarged, the wider sphere he may act in without

carefulness or distraction. And lastly, because the more his heart is renewed in the image of God, the more God can renew it in others by him, without destroying him by pride or vanity.

"15th. But for the proof of every one of these weighty truths, experience is worth a thousand reasons. I see, I feel them every day. Sometimes I cannot do good to others, because I am unwilling to do it; shame or pain is in the way; and I do not desire to serve God at so dear a rate. Sometimes I cannot do the good I desire to do, because I am in other respects too unholy. I know within myself, were I fit to be so employed, God would employ me in this work. But my heart is too unclean for such mighty works to be wrought by my hands. Sometimes I cannot accomplish the good I am employed in, because I do not pray more and more fervently; and sometimes even when I do pray, and that instantly, because I am not worthy that my prayer should be heard. Sometimes I dare not attempt to assist my neighbor, because I know the narrowness of my heart, that it cannot attend to many things, without utter confusion, and dissipation of thought. And a thousand times have I been mercifully withheld from success in the things I have attempted; because were one so proud and vain enabled to gain others, he would lose his own soul.

"16th. From all this I conclude, that where I am most holy myself, there I could most promote holiness in others; and, consequently, that I could more promote it here, than in any place under heaven. But I have likewise other reasons beside this to think so; and the first is, the plenteousness of the harvest. Here is indeed a large scene of various action. Here is room for charity in all its forms. There is scarce any way of doing good to our fellow-creatures, for which here is not daily occasion. I can now only touch upon the several heads. Here are poor families to be relieved; here are children to be educated; here are work-houses wherein both young and old want, and gladly receive the word of exhortation; here are prisons to be visited, wherein alone is a complication of all human wants; and, lastly, here are the schools of the prophets; here are tender minds to be formed and strengthened, and babes in Christ to be instructed, and perfected in all useful learning. Of these in particular we must observe, that he who gains only one, does thereby as much service to the world as he could do in a parish in his whole life, for his name is *legion;* in him are contained all those who shall be converted by him. He is not a single drop of the dew of heaven; but 'a river to make glad the city of God.'

"17th. But Epworth is yet a larger sphere of action than this; there I should have the care of two thousand souls. Two thousand souls, I see not how any man living can take care of an hundred. At least I could not; I know too well *Quid valeant humeri.* Because the

weight I have already upon me, is almost more than I am able to bear, ought I to increase it ten-fold?

——————imponere Pelio Ossam
Scilicet, atque Osse frondosum involvere Olympum.

Would this be the way to help either myself or my brethren up to heaven? Nay, but the mountains I reared would only crush my own soul, and so make me utterly useless to others.

"18th. I need not but just glance upon several other reasons, why I am more likely to be useful here than any where else. As, because I have the joint advice of many friends in any difficulty, and their joint encouragement in any dangers. Because the good bishop and vice-chancellor, are at hand to supply (as need is) their want of experience; because we have the eyes of multitudes upon us, who, even without designing it, perform the most substantial office of friendship, apprizing us where we have already fallen, and guarding us from falling again; lastly, because we have here a constant fund (which I believe this year will amount to near eighty pounds) to supply the bodily wants of the poor, and thereby prepare their souls to receive instruction.

"19th. If it be said that the love of the people at Epworth balances all these advantages here; I ask how long it will last? Only till I come to tell them plainly that their deeds are evil, and to make a particular application of that general sentence to say to each, 'Thou art the man!' Alas, sir, do I not know, what love they had for you at first? and how have they used you since? Why, just as every one will be used, whose business it is to bring light to them that love to sit in darkness.

"20th. Notwithstanding, therefore, their present prejudice in my favor, I cannot quit my first conclusion, that I am not likely to do that good any where, not even at Epworth, which I may do at Oxford; and yet one terrible objection lies in the way; Have you found it so in fact? What have you done there in so many years? Nay, have not the very attempts to do good, for want either of a particular turn of mind for the business you engaged in, or of prudence to direct you in the right method of doing it, not only been unsuccessful, but brought such contempt upon you, as has in great measure disqualified you for any future success? And are there not men in Oxford who are not only better and holier than you, but who have preserved their reputation, who being universally esteemed, are every way fitter to promote the glory of God in that place?

"21st. I am not careful to answer in this matter. It is not my part to say whether God has done any good by my hands; whether I have a particular turn of mind for this or not; or whether the want of success in my past attempts, was owing to want of prudence, to ignorance of the right method of acting, or to some other cause. But

the latter part of the objection, that he who is despised can do no good, that without reputation a man cannot be useful in the world, being the strong-hold of all the unbelieving, the vain-glorious, and the cowardly Christians, (so called,) I will, by the grace of God, see what reason that has, thus continually to exalt itself against the knowledge of Christ.

"22d. With regard to contempt then (under which term I include all the passions that border upon it, as hatred, envy, &c., and all the fruits that flow from them, such as calumny, reproach, and persecution in any of its forms) my first position, in defiance of worldly wisdom, is this, 'Every true Christian is contemned wherever he lives, by all who are not so, and who know him to be such, i. e., in effect, by all with whom he converses; since it is impossible for light not to shine.' This position I prove both from the example of our Lord, and from his express assertions. First from his example, if the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord, then, as our Master was despised and rejected of men, so will every one of his true disciples. But the disciple is not above his master, and therefore the consequence will not fail him a hair's-breadth. Secondly, from his own express assertions of this consequence. 'If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household.' Matthew x. 25. 'Remember (ye that would fain forget, or evade it) the word that I said unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.' And as for that vain hope, that this belongs only to the first followers of Christ, hear ye him. 'All these things will they do to you, because they know not him that sent me.' And again, 'because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you.' John xvi. 20. Both the persons who are hated, and the persons who hate them, and the cause of their hating them, are here clearly determined. The *hated* are all that are not of this world, that are born again in the knowledge and love of God; the *haters* are all that are of this world, that know not God, so as to *love* him with all their strength; the cause of their hatred is, the entire irreconcilable differences between their desires, judgments, and affections; because these know not God, and those are determined to know and pursue nothing besides him; because these esteem and love the world, and those count it dung and dross, and singly desire that love of Christ.

"23d. My next position is this, 'Until he be thus contemned, no man is in a state of salvation.' And this is no more than a plain inference from the former; for if all that are not of the world are therefore contemned by those that are, then till a man is so contemned, he is of the world, i. e., out of a state of salvation. Nor is it possible for all the trimmers between God and the world, for all the dodgers in religion, to elude this consequence, which God has estab-

lished, and not man, unless they could prove that a man may be of the world, i. e., void both of the knowledge and love of God, and yet be in a state of salvation. I must therefore, with or without leave of these, keep close to my Saviour's judgment, and maintain that contempt is a part of that cross which every man must bear if he will follow him; that it is the badge of his discipleship, the stamp of his profession, the constant seal of his calling; insomuch that, though a man may be despised without being saved, yet he cannot be saved without being despised.

"24th. I should not spend any more words about this great truth, but that it seems at present quite voted out of the world; the masters in Israel, learned men, men of renown, seem absolutely to have forgotten it; nay, censure those who have not forgotten the words of their Lord, as setters forth of strange doctrines. And hence it is commonly asked, 'How can these things be?' How can contempt be necessary to salvation? I answer, as it is a necessary means of purifying souls for heaven, as it is a blessed instrument of cleansing them from pride, which else would turn their very graces into poison; as it is a glorious antidote against vanity, which would otherwise pollute and destroy all their labors; as it is an excellent medicine to heal the anger and impatience of spirit, apt to insinuate into their best employments; and, in a word, as it is one of the choicest remedies in the whole magazine of God against love of the world, in which whosoever liveth is counted dead before him.

"25th. And hence (as a full answer to the preceding objection) I infer one position more. That our being contemned is absolutely necessary to our doing good in the world. If not to our doing some good (for God may work by Judas) yet to our doing so much as we otherwise should. For since God will employ those instruments most, who are fittest to be employed; since the holier a man is, the fitter instrument he is for the God of holiness; and since contempt is so glorious a means of advancing holiness in him that is exercised thereby. Nay, since no man can be holy at all without it, who can keep off the consequence? The being contemned is absolutely necessary to a Christian's doing his full measure of good in the world.—Where then is the scribe? Where is the wise? Where is the disputer of this world? Where is the replier against God, with his sage maxims? 'He that is despised can do no good in the world; to be useful, a man must be esteemed; to advance the glory of God, you must have a fair reputation.' Saith the world so? But what saith the Scripture? Why, that God hath laughed all the heathen wisdom to scorn? It saith, that twelve despised followers of a despised Master, all of whom were of no reputation, who were esteemed as the filth and off-scouring of the world, did more good in it than all the tribes of Israel. It saith, that the despised Master of these despised followers left a standing direction to us, and to our children, 'Blessed

are ye' (not accursed with the heavy curse of doing no good, of being useless in the world) 'when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil of you falsely for my name's sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven.'

"26th. These are part of my reasons for choosing to abide (till I am better informed) in the station wherein God has placed me. As for the flock committed to your care, whom for many years you have diligently fed with the sincere milk of the word, I trust in God your labor shall not be in vain, either to yourself or them; many of them the Great Shepherd has by your hand delivered from the hand of the destroyer, some of whom are already entered into peace, and some remain unto this day. For yourself, I doubt not, but when your warfare is accomplished, when you are made perfect through sufferings, you shall come to your grave, not with sorrow, but as a ripe shock of corn, full of years and victories. And he that took care of the poor sheep before you was born, will not forget them when you are dead."

Mr. Samuel Wesley wrote to his brother John at Oxford, February 8, 1735, and made some observations on the letter he had written to his father. He tells him, "Charles was in the right, to desire I might have your whole letter. Though you have stated the point, so as to take away the question, at least all possibility of differing about it, if it be only this, whether you are to serve Christ, or Belial? I see no end of writing now, but merely complying with your desire of having my thoughts upon it; which I here give in short, and I think almost in full, though I pass over strictures on less matters.

"1. Your friends, retirement, frequent ordinances, and freedom from care, are great blessings; all, except the last, you may expect, in a *lower degree*, elsewhere. Sure all your labors are not come to this, that more is absolutely necessary for you, for the very being of your christian life, than for the salvation of all the parish priests in England. It is very strange!

"2. To the question, 'What good have you done at Oxford?' You are not careful to answer: how comes it then you are so very careful about the good you might do at Epworth? The help that is done on earth, he doeth it himself, is a full solution of that terrible difficulty.

"3. The impossibility of return, the certainty of being disliked by them that now cry you up, and the small comparative good my father has done, are good prudential reasons; but I think can hardly extend to conscience. 'You can leave Oxford when you will.' Not surely to such advantage. 'You have a probability of doing good there.' Will that good be wholly undone if you leave it? Why should you not leaven another lump?

"4. What you say of contempt is nothing to the purpose; for if you will go to Epworth, I will answer for it, you shall, in a competent time, be despised as much as your heart can wish. In your doctrine, you argue from a particular to a general. 'To be useful, a man

must be esteemed,' is as certain as any proposition in *Euclid*, and I defy all mankind to produce one instance, of directly doing spiritual good without it, in the whole book of God.—5. 'God, who provided for the flock before, will do it after my father.' May he not suffer them to be, what they once were, almost heathens? And may not that be prevented by your ministry? It could never enter into my head that you could refuse on any other ground, than a general resolution against the cure of souls. I shall give no positive reason for it, till my first is *answered*. *The order of the Church* stakes you down, and the more you struggle will hold the faster. If there be such a thing as truth, I insist upon it you must, when opportunity offers, either perform that promise, or repent of it: *Utrum mavis?*" Which do you prefer?

To this letter Mr. John Wesley replied on the 13th of the same month.—"Neither you nor I," says he, "have any time to spare; so I must be as short as I can.

"There are two questions between us, one relating to being good, the other to doing good. With regard to the former: 1. You allow I enjoy more of friends, retirement, freedom from care, and divine ordinances, than I could do elsewhere; and I add, 1. I feel all this to be but just enough. 2. I have always found less than this to be too little for me; and therefore, 3. Whatever others do, I could not throw up any part of it, without manifest hazard to my salvation.

"2. As to the latter, I am not careful to answer, 'what good I have done at Oxford'; because I cannot think of it without the utmost danger. I am careful what good I may do at Epworth, 1. Because I can think of it without any danger at all; 2. Because as I cannot, as matters now stand, avoid thinking of it without sin.

"3. Another can supply my place at Epworth, better than at Oxford; and the good done here, is of a far more diffusive nature. It is a more extensive benefit to sweeten the fountain, than to do the same to particular streams.

"4. To the objection, You are despised at Oxford therefore you can do no good there; I answer, 1. A Christian will be despised any where. 2. No one is a Christian till he is despised. 3. His being despised will not hinder his doing good, but much further it, by making him a better Christian. Without contradicting any of these propositions, I allow, that every one to whom you do good directly, must esteem you, first or last.—N. B. A man may despise you for one thing, hate you for another, and envy you for a third.

"5. God may suffer Epworth to be worse than before. But *I may not* attempt to prevent it, with so great a hazard to my own soul.—Your last argument is either *ignoratio elenchi*, or implies these two propositions: '1. You resolve against any parochial cure of souls. 2. The priest who does not undertake the first parochial cure that offers, is perjured.' Let us add a third: 'The tutor who being in

orders never accepts of a parish, is perjured'; and then I deny all three."

This letter Mr. Samuel Wesley answered, paragraph by paragraph. "1. You say you have but just enough. Had ever any man on earth more? 'You have experienced less to be insufficient.' Not in the course of the priesthood to which you are called. In that way, I am persuaded, though he that gathereth much can have nothing over, yet he that gathereth little can have no lack. 2. 'There is danger in thinking of the good you have done, but not of what you may do.' Vain glory lies both ways; 'But the latter was your duty.' So was the former; without you can compare two things without thinking of one of them. 3. 'The good done at Oxford is more diffusive.' It is not *that good* you have promised. You deceive yourself, if you imagine you do not here think of *what you have done.* 'Your want may be better supplied at Epworth'; not if my father is right in his successions. 4. 'A Christian will be despised every where; no one is a Christian till he is so; it will further his doing good.' If universal propositions, I deny them all. Esteem goes before the good done, as well as follows it. 'A man may both despise and envy.' True; he may have a hot and a cold fit of an ague. Contempt in general, is no more incompatible with, than necessary to, benefiting others.—5. See the first and third. 6. I said plainly, I thought you had made a general resolution; as to taking the first offer, I supposed an opportunity a proper one; and declare now my judgment, should you live never so long, in the ordinary course of providence, you can never meet another *so proper.* 'An ordained tutor, who accepts not a cure, is perjured;' alter the term into, 'Who resolves not to accept;' and I will maintain it, unless you prove either of these two: '1. There is no such obligation at taking orders. 2. This obligation is dispensed with.' Both which, I utterly deny."

Mr. John Wesley now closed the debate, in a manner that does credit both to his head and heart. His letter is dated the 4th of March. He observes to his brother, "I had rather dispute with you, if I must dispute, than with any man living; because it may be done with so little expense of time and words. The question is now brought to one point, and the whole of the argument will lie in one single syllogism.

"Neither hope of doing greater good, nor fear of any evil, ought to deter you from what you have engaged yourself to do; but you have engaged yourself to undertake the cure of a parish: therefore, neither that hope nor that fear ought to deter you from it. The only doubt which remains is, whether I have engaged myself or not? You think I did at my ordination, 'Before God and his high priest.' I think I did not. However, I own I am not the proper judge of the oath I then took: it being certain, and allowed by all. '*Verbis, in quæ quis jurejurando adigitur, sensum genuinum, ut et obligationi Sacramenti*

modum ac mensuram, præstitui a mente, non præstantis sed exigentis juramentum.'—'That the true sense of the words of an oath, and the mode and extent of its obligation, are not to be determined by him who takes it, but by him who requires it.' Therefore it is not I, but the high priest of God, before whom I contracted that engagement, who is to judge of the nature and extent of it.

"Accordingly, the post after I received yours, I referred it entirely to him; proposing this single question to him, Whether I had, at my ordination, engaged myself to undertake the cure of a parish or no? His answer runs in these words.* 'It doth not seem to me, that at your ordination you engaged yourself to undertake the cure of any parish, provided you can, as a clergyman, better serve God and his church in your present or some other station.'—Now that I can, as a clergyman, better serve God and his church, in my present station, I have all reasonable evidence."

The assertions, that "every true Christian is contemned wherever he lives, by all who are not so,"—that, "until he be thus contemned, no man is in a state of salvation," &c. will appear, no doubt, the most singular of any in these letters. The expressions certainly are too strong, and the language on the whole too abrupt, to convey his full meaning. Perhaps Mr. Wesley's opinion on this subject, a little more unfolded, may be reduced to the following propositions.

1. That a true Christian, in the temper of his mind, the motives of his actions, and the whole tenor of his behavior, is not conformed to worldly-minded men, and will therefore be despised, and sometimes persecuted by them.

2. Until a man be thus transformed by the renewing of his mind, and stand opposed to the principles and practices of those who are of the world, and not of God, he is not a Christian.

3. That a Christian being contemned and persecuted by those who are not Christians, will tend to make him more careful and diligent in all the means of improvement in the Christian life, and further his progress to a true conformity to Christ.

4. That a Christian's being contemned, will not hinder, but greatly increase his usefulness, particularly in times of persecution, when patience, humility, love, and the other virtues of his mind, will be in the highest degree of exercise, and appear to the greatest advantage, in contrast with the opposite dispositions of the persecutors. By these means, Christians, in all ages of the church, have conquered those who hated them most, and been the instruments of their conversion.

I will not assert that Mr. Wesley would have signed these propositions, as containing the whole of his opinion on this subject in 1735, though I believe they vary but little from it; and I am persuaded,

* The bishop's letter lies before me, and runs in the words mentioned.

that he would afterwards have subscribed them with the greatest readiness.

In the midst of this debate he wrote to his mother, without taking the least notice of it: nor do I find that she wrote to him on that subject; which appears extraordinary, if she was of the same opinion with her husband and her son Samuel. Mr. Wesley's letter is on the subject of christian liberty, concerning which, he wished to have his mother's opinion. He says, "I have had a great deal of conversation lately on the subject of christian liberty, and should be glad of your thoughts, as to the several notions of it which good men entertain. I perceive different persons take it, in at least six different senses. 1. For liberty from wilful sin, in opposition to the bondage of natural corruption. 2. For liberty as to rites and points of discipline. So Mr. Whiston says, 'Though the *stations* were instituted by the Apostles, yet the liberty of the christian law dispenses with them on extraordinary occasions.' 3. For liberty from denying ourselves in little things: for trifles, it is commonly thought, we may indulge in safely, because Christ has made us free. This notion, I a little doubt, is not sound. 4. For liberty from fear, or a filial freedom from fear on account of his past sins; for he believes in Christ, and hope frees him from fear of losing his present labor, or of being a cast-away hereafter. 5. Christian liberty is taken by some, for a freedom from restraint, as to sleep or food. So they would say, your drinking but one glass of wine, or my rising at a fixed hour, was contrary to christian liberty. Lastly, it is taken for freedom from rules: if by this be meant, making our rules yield to extraordinary occasions, well; if the having no rules at all, this liberty, is as yet too high for me; I cannot attain unto it."

Mr. Wesley's father died in April, and the living of Epworth was given away in May; so that he now considered himself as settled at Oxford, without any risk of being further molested in his quiet retreat. But a new scene of action was soon proposed to him, of which he had not before, the least conception. The trustees of the new Colony of Georgia were greatly in want of proper persons to send thither, to preach the gospel, not only to the Colony, but to the Indians. They fixed their eyes on Mr. John Wesley, and some of his friends, as the most proper persons, on account of the regularity of their behavior, their abstemious way of living, and their readiness to endure hardships. On the 28th of August, being in London, he met with his friend Dr. Burton,* for whom he had a great esteem; and the next day was introduced to Mr. Oglethorpe, where the matter was pro-

* John Burton, D. D. was born in 1696, at Wembworth in Devonshire, his father being Rector of that parish; and was educated at Corpus-Christi-College, Oxford. In 1725, being then Pro-proctor and Master of the Schools, he spoke a Latin oration before the determining Bachelor, which is entitled, "Heli; or an instance of a Magistrate's erring through unseasonable lenity." It was written and published with a view to encourage

posed to him, and strongly urged upon him by such arguments as they thought most likely to dispose his mind to accept of the proposal. It does not appear that Mr. Wesley gave them any positive answer. He thought it best to take the opinion of his friends. Accordingly, he wrote to his brother Samuel, visited Mr. Law, and in three or four days, set out for Manchester, to consult Mr. Clayton, Mr. Byrom, and several others whose judgment he respected. From thence he went to Epworth, and laid the matter before his mother, and eldest sister, who consented to his acceptance of the proposal. His brother Samuel did the same. Mr. Wesley still hesitated, and on the 8th of September, Dr. Burton wrote to him, pressing him to a compliance. His letter is directed to Manchester, and franked by Mr. Oglethorpe.

"*7ber* 8, 1735.
C. C. C. Oxon.

"Dear Sir,

"I had it in commission to wait upon you at Oxford, whether by this time I imagined you might be arrived. Your short conference with Mr. Oglethorpe, has raised the hopes of many good persons, that you and yours would join in an undertaking, which cannot be better executed than by such instruments. I have thought again of the matter, and upon the result of the whole, cannot help again recommending the undertaking to your choice: and the more so, since in our inquiries, there appears such an unfitness in the generality of people. That state of ease, luxury, levity, and inadvertancy, observable in most of the plausible and popular Doctors, are disqualifications in a christian teacher, and would lead us to look for a different set of people. The more men are inured to contempt of ornaments and conveniences of life, to serious thoughts and bodily austerities, the fitter they are for a state which more properly represents our christian pilgrimage. And if upon consideration of the matter, you think yourselves (as you must do, at least amidst such a scarcity of proper

the salutary exercise of academical discipline. He also introduced into the schools, Locke, and other eminent modern philosophers, as suitable companions to Aristotle. He printed a double series of philosophical questions, for the use of the younger students; from which Mr. Johnson of Magdalene-College, Cambridge, took the hint of his larger work of the same kind.

When the settling of Georgia was in agitation, Dr. Bray, justly revered for his institution of parochial libraries, Dr. Stephen Hales, Dr. Berriman, and other learned Divines, entreated Dr. Burton's pious assistance in that undertaking. This he readily gave, by preaching before the society in 1732, and publishing his sermon, with an appendix on the state of that Colony. On the death of Dr. Edward Littleton, he was presented by Eton-College to the Vicarage of Maple-Derham, in Oxfordshire. When he went to take possession, a melancholy scene presented itself to his view; a widow, with three infant daughters, to be turned out, without a home, and without a fortune. From his compassion arose love; for Mrs. Littleton was handsome, elegant, ingenious, and had great sweetness of temper. The consequence was marriage. In 1760, he exchanged his Vicarage of Maple-Derham, for the Rectory of Worplesdon in Surry. In his advanced age, he collected and published in one volume, all his scattered pieces, under the title of Opuscula Miscellanea. He died in February, 1771.

persons) the fit instruments for so good a work, you will be ready to embrace this opportunity of doing good; which is not in vain offered to you.—Be pleased to write a line signifying your thoughts to me, or Mr. Oglethorpe; and if by advice I can be assisting to you, you may command my best, best services.

"Yours, affectionately,

"JOHN BURTON.

"P. S. Mr. Horn telling me, he heard you were at Manchester. I presume you are with Mr. Clayton, deliberating about this affair."

Mr. Wesley now consented to go to Georgia. He had said to his brother Samuel, that his objections to Epworth were founded on his own weakness. He thought he should have so many temptations to what he then deemed irregularity in eating and drinking, at the visits he should be obliged to make, that he could not stand against them; besides the difficulty he would have of spending his time to the most advantage. But in going to Georgia, he saw a prospect of great usefulness, without any of these dangers to himself. Nay, I have no doubt, but the very difficulty of the undertaking, and the prospect of the hardships he must undergo, had some influence in disposing him to accept of it. Dr. Burton wrote to him again on the 18th of the same month, as follows: "It was with no small pleasure, that I heard your resolution on the point under consideration. I am persuaded, that an opportunity is offered of doing much good in an affair, for the conducting of which we can find but few proper instruments. Your undertaking adds greater credit to our proceedings; and the propagation of religion, will be the distinguishing honor of our colony. This has ever, in like cases, been the *desideratum*: a defect seemingly lamented, but scarce ever remedied. With greater satisfaction therefore, we enjoy your readiness to undertake the work. When it is known, that good men are thus employed, the pious and charitable will be the more encouraged to promote the work. You have too much steadiness of mind, to be disturbed by the light scoffs of the idle and profane. Let me put a matter to be considered by your brother Charles. Would it not be more adviseable that he were in orders?"

On the 28th of the same month, a few days before Mr. Oglethorpe intended to sail, Dr. Burton wrote again to Mr. Wesley, giving him advice on several points respecting his future situation. Amongst other things he observes,—"Under the influence of Mr. Oglethorpe, giving weight to your endeavors, much may be effected under the present circumstances. The apostolical manner of preaching, from house to house, will, through God's grace, be effectual to turn many to righteousness. The people are babes in the progress of their christian life, to be fed with milk instead of strong meat; and the wise householder will bring out of his stores, food proportioned to the necessities of his family. The circumstances of your present christian pilgrimage will furnish the most affecting subjects of discourse;

and what arises *pro re nata*, will have greater influence than a labored discourse on a subject, in which men think themselves not so immediately concerned. With regard to your behavior and manner of address, that must be determined according to the different circumstances of persons, &c. But you will always, in the use of means, consider the great end, and therefore your applications will of course vary. You will keep in view the pattern of that gospel preacher St. Paul, who became all things to all men, that he might gain some. Here is a nice trial of christian prudence: accordingly, in every case you would distinguish between what is essential, and what is merely circumstantial to Christianity; between what is indispensable, and what is variable; between what is of divine, and what is of human authority. I mention this, because men are apt to deceive themselves in such cases, and we see the traditions and ordinances of men frequently insisted on, with more rigor than the commandments of God, to which they are subordinate. Singularities of less importance, are often espoused with more zeal, than the weighty matters of God's law. As in all points we love ourselves, so especially in our hypotheses. Where a man has, as it were, a property in a notion, he is most industrious to improve it, and that in proportion to the labor of thought he has bestowed upon it; and as its value rises in imagination, we are in proportion more unwilling to give it up, and dwell upon it more pertinaciously, than upon considerations of general necessity and use. This is a flattering mistake, against which we should guard ourselves. I hope to see you at Gravesend if possible. I write in haste what occurs to my thoughts—*disce docendus adhuc, quæ censet amiculus.* May God prosper your endeavors for the propagation of his gospel!"

I shall now leave Mr. Wesley, preparing for his voyage to America. While he was abroad, Mr. Gambold, who had been intimately acquainted with him at Oxford, wrote some account of his proceedings there, and endeavored to delineate his character. He sent this to one of Mr. Wesley's relations; and I shall close this chapter with the following short abstract from it:

"About the middle of March, 1730, I became acquainted with Mr. Charles Wesley, of Christ-Church. I had been for two years before in deep melancholy; so it pleased God to disappoint and break a proud spirit, and to embitter the world to me as I was inclining to relish its vanities. During this time, I had no friend to whom I could open my mind; no man did care for my soul, or none at least understood her paths. The learned endeavored to give me right notions, and the friendly to divert me. One day an old acquaintance entertained me with some reflections on the whimsical Mr. Charles Wesley; his preciseness, and pious extravagancies. Upon hearing this, I suspected he might be a good Christian. I therefore went to his room, and without ceremony desired the benefit of his conversation.

I had so large a share of it afterwards, that hardly a day passed while I was at college, but we were together once, if not oftener.

"After some time, he introduced me to his brother John, of Lincoln College: 'For he is somewhat older,' said he, 'than I am, and can resolve your doubts better.' I never observed any person have a more real deference for another than he had for his brother; which is the more remarkable, because such near relations, being equals by birth, and conscious to each other of all the little familiar passages of their lives, commonly stand too close, to see the ground there may be for such submission. Indeed he followed his brother entirely; could I describe one of them I should describe both. I shall therefore say no more of Charles, but that he was a man formed for friendship; who by his cheerfulness and vivacity would refresh his friend's heart: with attentive consideration, would enter into, and settle all his concerns as far as he was able: he would do any thing for him, great or small, and by a habit of mutual openness and freedom, would leave no room for misunderstanding.

"The Wesleys were already talked of for some religious practices, which were first occasioned by Mr. Morgan, of Christ-Church. He was a young man of an excellent disposition. He took all opportunities to make his companions in love with a good life; to create in them a reverence for the public worship; to tell them of their faults with a sweetness and simplicity that disarmed the worst tempers. He delighted much in works of charity; he kept several children at school; and, when he found beggars in the street, would bring them into his chambers, and talk to them. From these combined friends began a little society. Mr. John Wesley was the chief manager, for which he was very fit: for he had not only more learning and experience than the rest, but he was blest with such activity as to be always gaining ground, and such steadiness that he lost none. What proposals he made to any, were sure to alarm them; because he was so much in earnest; nor could they afterwards slight them, because they saw him always the same. What supported this uniform vigor, was, the care he took to consider well every affair before he engaged in it; making all his decisions in the fear of God, without passion, humor, or self-confidence. For though he had naturally a very clear apprehension, yet his exact prudence depended more on his humility and singleness of heart. He had, I think, something of authority in his countenance, yet he never assumed anything to himself above his companions; any of them might speak their mind, and their words were as strictly regarded by him as his words were by them.

"Their undertaking included these several particulars: to converse with young students; to visit the prisons; to instruct some poor families; to take care of a school and a parish work-house. They took great pains with the younger members of the university, to rescue them from bad company, and encourage them in a sober studious

life. They would get them to breakfast, and over a dish of tea endeavor to fasten some good hint upon them. They would bring them acquainted with other well-disposed young men, give them assistance in the difficult parts of their learning, and watch over them with the greatest tenderness.

"Some or other of them went to the castle every day, and another most commonly to Bocardo. Whoever went to the castle was to read in the chapel to as many prisoners as would attend, and to talk apart to the man or men whom he had taken particularly in charge. When a new prisoner came, their conversation with him for four or five times was close and searching.—If any one was under sentence of death, or appeared to have some intentions of a new life, they came every day to his assistance, and partook in the conflict and suspense of those who should now be found able, or not able to lay hold on salvation. In order to release those who were confined for small debts, and to purchase books and other necessaries, they raised a little fund, to which many of their acquaintance contributed quarterly. They had prayers at the castle most Wednesdays and Fridays, a sermon on Sunday, and the sacrament once a month.

"When they undertook any poor family, they saw them at least once a week; sometimes gave them money, admonished them of their vices, read to them, and examined their children. The school was, I think, of Mr. Wesley's own setting up; however, he paid the mistress, and clothed some, if not all the children. When they went thither, they inquired how each child behaved, saw their work, heard them read and say their prayers, or catechism, and explained part of it. In the same manner they taught the children in the work-house, and read to the old people as they did to the prisoners.

"They seldom took any notice of the accusations brought against them for their charitable employments; but if they did make any reply, it was commonly such a plain and simple one, as if there was nothing more in the case, but that they had just heard such doctrines of their Saviour, and had believed and done accordingly. Sometimes they would ask such questions as the following: Shall we be more happy in another life, the more virtuous we are in this? Are we the more virtuous the more intensely we love God and man? Is love, of all habits, the more intense, the more we exercise it? Is either helping or trying to help man for God's sake, an exercise of love to God or man? particularly, is feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, or prisoners, an exercise of love to God or man? Is endeavoring to teach the ignorant, to admonish sinners, to encourage the good, to comfort the afflicted, and reconcile enemies, an exercise of love to God or man? Shall we be more happy in another life, if we do the former of these things, and try to do the latter; or if we do not the one, nor try to do the other?

"I could say a great deal of his private piety; how it was nour-

ished by a continual recourse to God; and preserved by a strict watchfulness in beating down pride, and reducing the craftiness and impetuosity of nature, to a child-like simplicity; and in a good degree crowned with divine love, and victory over the whole set of earthly passions. He thought prayer to be more his business than anything else; and I have seen him come out of his closet with a serenity of countenance that was next to shining; it discovered what he had been doing, and gave me double hope of receiving wise directions, in the matter about which I came to consult him. In all his motions he attended to the will of God. He had neither the presumption, nor the leisure to anticipate things whose season was not now; and would show some uneasiness whenever any of us, by impertinent speculations, were shifting off the appointed improvement of the present minute. By being always cheerful, but never triumphing, he so husbanded the secret consolations which God gave him, that they seldom left him, and never but in a state of strong and long-suffering faith. Thus the repose and satisfaction of the mind being otherwise secured, there were in him no idle cravings, no chagrin or fickleness of spirit, nothing but the genuine wants of the body to be relieved by outward accommodations and refreshments. When he was just come home from a long journey, and had been in different companies, he resumed his usual employments, as if he had never left them; no dissipation of thought appeared, no alteration of taste: much less was he discomposed by any slanders or affronts; he was only afraid lest he should grow proud of this conformity to his Master. In short, he used many endeavors to be religious, but none to seem so; with a zeal always upon the stretch, and a most transparent sincerity, he addicted himself to every good word and work.

"Because he required such a regulation of our studies, as might devote them all to God, he has been accused as one that discouraged learning. Far from that, for the first thing he struck at in young men, was, that indolence which will not submit to close thinking. He earnestly recommended to them, a method and order in all their actions. The morning hour of devotion was from five to six, and the same in the evening. On the point of early rising, he told them, the well spending of the day would depend. For some years past, he and his friends have read the New Testament together in the evenings; and after every portion of it, having heard the conjectures the rest had to offer, he made his own observations on the phrase, design, and difficult places; and one or two wrote these down from his mouth.

"If any one could have provoked him, I should; for I was very slow in coming into their measures, and very remiss in doing my part. I frequently contradicted his assertions; or, which is much the same, distinguished upon them. I hardly ever submitted to his advice at the time he gave it, though I relented afterwards. One

time he was in fear I had taken up notions that were not safe, and pursued my spiritual improvement in an erroneous, because inactive way; so he came over and staid with me near a week. He condoled with me the incumbrances of my constitution, heard all I had to say, and endeavored to pick out my meaning, and yielded to me as far as he could. I never saw more humility in him than at this time.

"Mr. Wesley had not only friends at Oxford to assist him, but a great many correspondents. He set apart one day at least in the week, to write letters, and he was no slow composer; in which, without levity or affectation, but with plainness and fervor, he gave his advice in particular cases, and vindicated the strict original sense of the gospel precepts.

"He is now gone to Georgia as a missionary, where there is ignorance that aspires after divine wisdom, but no false learning that is got above it. He is, I confess, still living; and I know that an advantageous character is more decently bestowed on the deceased. But, besides that his condition is very like that of the dead, being unconcerned in all we say, I am not making any attempt on the opinion of the public, but only studying a private edification. A family picture of him, his relations may be allowed to keep by them. And this is the idea of Mr. Wesley, which I cherish for the service of my own soul, and which I take the liberty likewise to deposit with you."

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

THE

LIFE

OF THE

REV. JOHN WESLEY, M. A.

SOME TIME FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

COLLECTED FROM HIS PRIVATE PAPERS AND PRINTED WORKS; AND WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF HIS EXECUTORS.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS ANCESTORS AND RELATIONS;

WITH

THE LIFE OF THE

REV. CHARLES WESLEY, A. M.

COLLECTED FROM HIS PRIVATE JOURNAL, AND NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

THE WHOLE FORMING A HISTORY OF METHODISM, IN WHICH THE PRINCIPLES AND ECONOMY OF THE METHODISTS ARE UNFOLDED.

BY

JOHN WHITEHEAD, M. D.

AUTHOR OF THE DISCOURSE DELIVERED AT MR. WESLEY'S FUNERAL.

——————In labors more abundant——
A workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of Truth.—PAUL.

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I hereby certify that this edition of WHITEHEAD'S LIFE OF WESLEY, stereotyped by me, is as accurate a copy of the original, as it was possible to execute. GEO. A. CURTIS.

Boston, June 20, 1844.

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THE

LIFE OF THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

BOOK SECOND.

CHAPTER III.

OF MR. WESLEY'S VOYAGE TO AMERICA, OF HIS LABORS THERE, AND RETURN TO ENGLAND IN 1738.

It has been already observed, that Mr. Wesley, at this time, had very imperfect notions of the method proposed in the gospel of attaining true christian experience. He did indeed differ, in some things, from the generality of the clergy in the Church of England: he carried his notions of gospel holiness much further than they thought, either necessary or attainable in this life; and believing, that, an exact attendance on the instituted means of grace, with acts of charity, self-denial, and mortification, were the chief helps to attain it, he carried these particulars to an extent which made him appear singular. His ardor to attain the end was exceeded by nothing but the exactness and rigor with which he practised, what he thought the means of attaining it. His extreme attention to every thing that might be helpful in subduing the evil propensities of his nature, and that might further his progress towards a conformity with Christ, led him to consider and speak of the observance of little things, as of the utmost importance to his salvation. Not that he thought the things of so much importance in themselves, detached from others; but as filling up the more minute parts of a system of duties, which without them, would be incomplete and less beneficial to him. Like as a man straitened in his circumstances, and struggling to get forward in the world; if he only attend to the more important branches of his business, and wholly neglect the numerous little expenses of his family, will soon find that they greatly retard his progress. Mr. Wesley reasoned in the same way, concerning the external helps and hinderances in a religious course of life, and therefore thought it his duty to abstain from the minutest thing that might be hurtful, and to practise every thing that might in any respect be useful to him. And as little things are too commonly overlooked, though great ones are

made up of them, he might perhaps on this account speak more strongly of them than otherwise he would have done. However this be, his scrupulous exactness in things which seemed to others of little importance, or wholly indifferent in religion, chiefly attracted notice, and made him appear whimsical and superstitious, to persons who did not perceive the principle which governed his conduct. This lessened the dignity of his character in their opinion, and weakened his influence over those under his care. To this principle, therefore, which governed him in the smallest matters, we must attribute, in great measure, his want of success, and most of the inconveniences which he suffered in Georgia. We may blame his want of prudence, because the principle on which he reasoned was sometimes carried too far; but his integrity, and upright intention will remain unsullied.

On Tuesday, the 14th of October, he set out for Gravesend, in order to embark for Georgia,* accompanied by his brother Mr. Charles Wesley, Mr. Ingham of Queen's College, Oxford, and Mr.

* Georgia is situated between Carolina and Florida. It extends 120 miles upon the sea-coast, and 300 miles from thence to the Apalachian mountains, and its boundaries to the north and south, are the rivers Savannah and Alatamaha.—The settlement of a colony between the rivers Savannah and Alatamaha, was meditated in England in 1732, for the accommodation of poor people in Great Britain and Ireland, and for the further security of Carolina. Humane and opulent men suggested a plan of transporting a number of indigent families to this part of America, free of expense. For this purpose they applied to the king, George II. and obtained from him letters patent, bearing date June 9, 1732, for legally carrying into execution what they had generously projected. They called the new province Georgia, in honor of the king, who encouraged the plan. A corporation, consisting of 21 persons, was constituted by the name of "The Trustees for settling and establishing the Colony of Georgia."

In November, 1732, 116 settlers embarked for Georgia, to be conveyed thither free of expense, furnished with every thing requisite for building and cultivating the soil. Mr. James Oglethorpe, one of the trustees, and an active promoter of the settlement, embarked as the head and director of these settlers. They arrived at Charlestown early in the next year. Mr. Oglethorpe, accompanied by William Bull, shortly after his arrival, visited Georgia; and after surveying the country, marked the spot on which Savannah now stands, as the fittest to begin their settlement. Here they accordingly began and built a small fort; a number of small huts for their defence and accommodation. Such of the settlers as were able to bear arms were embodied, and well appointed with officers, arms, and ammunition. A treaty of friendship was concluded between the settlers and their neighbors the Creek Indians, and every thing wore the aspect of peace and future prosperity. But the fundamental regulations established by the trustees of Georgia, were ill adapted to the circumstances and situation of the poor settlers, and of pernicious consequence to the prosperity of the province. Like other distant legislators, who framed their regulations on principles of speculation, they were liable to many errors and mistakes; and however good their design, their rules were found improper and impracticable. These injudicious regulations and restrictions, the wars in which they were involved with the Spaniards and Indians, and the frequent insurrections among themselves, threw the colony into a state of confusion and wretchedness too great for human nature long to endure. Their oppressed situation was represented to the Trustees by repeated complaints, till at length finding that the province languished under their care, and weary with the complaints of the people, they, in the year 1752, surrendered their charter to the king, and it was made a royal government. Georgia is now a flourishing state: what are called the upper counties are pretty generally supplied with preachers of the Baptist and Methodist persuasion; but the greater part of the state is without ministers of any denomination.

Delamotte, the son of a merchant in London. "Our end," says he, "in leaving our native country, was not to avoid want, God having given us plenty of temporal blessings; nor to gain the dung or dross of riches or honor; but singly this, to save our souls; to live wholly to the glory of God." In the afternoon they found the Simmonds off Gravesend, and immediately went on board. The next day he wrote to his brother, Mr. Samuel Wesley, of Tiverton, informing him that he had presented his father's commentary on Job, to the Queen, and had received many good words and smiles. In this letter he declares his sentiments to his brother, concerning the usual method of teaching boys the heathen poets in large schools. "The uncertainty," says he, "of having another opportunity to tell you my thoughts in this life, obliges me to tell you what I have often thought of, and that in as few and plain words as I can. Elegance of style is not to be weighed against purity of heart; purity both from the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye and the pride of life. Therefore, whatever has any tendency to impair that purity, is not to be tolerated, much less recommended for the sake of that elegance. But of this sort (I speak not from the reason of the thing only, nor from single experience) are most of the classics usually read in great schools: many of them tending to inflame the lusts of the flesh (besides Ovid, Virgil's Æneid, and Terence's Eunuch) and more to feed the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. I beseech you therefore by the mercies of God, who would have us holy as he is holy, that you banish all such poison from your school, that you introduce in their place such christian authors as will work together with you in building up your flock in the knowledge and love of God. For assure yourself, dear brother, you are even now called to the converting of heathens as well as I.

"So many souls are committed to your charge by God, to be prepared for a happy eternity. You are to instruct them, not only in the beggarly elements of Greek and Latin, but much more in the gospel. You are to labor with all your might to convince them, that Christianity is not a negation, or an external thing, but a new heart, a mind conformed to that of Christ; faith, working by love."

These sentiments have been spoken of as singular; and have been brought forward as an indirect evidence of Mr. Wesley's fondness for singularity. But if we understand them with a little candor, and the opinions of learned and pious men on the same subject be fairly stated, there will appear nothing singular in them. He here condemns the reading and explaining of the heathen poets, *indiscriminately*, to the youth in great schools; but we must not suppose, that he would have condemned a judicious selection from them. Indeed, after his school at Kingswood was fully established, he made such a selection for the use of it, so far as he thought would be necessary for the youth likely to be educated in it. His words being understood with this limitation, Mr. Wesley speaks nothing but what the most learned and pious men

in the christian church, have, in all ages, unanimously spoken before him. Nay the heathen moralists themselves, deliver the same sentiments concerning their own poets. "Plato, the wise and judicious philosopher, banished the poets from his imaginary commonwealth, and did not think them proper to be put into the hands of youth without great precaution; to prevent the dangers which might arise from them. *Cicero plainly approves of his conduct, and supposing with him, that poetry contributes only to the corruption of manners, to enervate the mind, and strengthen the false prejudices consequential of a bad education, and ill examples, he seems astonished that the instruction of children should begin with them, and the study of them be called by the name of learning and a liberal education."†

The two following days after he got on board, were spent with his friends, partly in the ship and partly on shore, in exhorting one another to shake off every weight, and to run with patience the race

* Videsne poetæ quid mali afferant?—Ita sunt dulces, ut non legantur modo, sed etiam ediscantur. Sic ad malam domesticam disciplnam, vitamque umbratilem et delicatam, cum accesserunt etiam poetæ, nervos virtutis elidunt. Rectè igitur a Platone educuntur ex ea civitate quam finxit ille, cum mores optimos et optimum reip. Statum quæreret. At vero nos, docti scilicet a Græcia, hæc et a pueritia legimus et didicimus. Hanc eruditionem liberalem et doctrinam putamus. Tusc. Quæst. lib. ii.

† The Jews prohibited the tutors of their children from instructing them in Pagan literature. "Maledictus esto," says the Gemara, "quisquis filium suum sapientiam græcanicam edocet." "Let him be accursed, whoever teacheth his son Greek literature." The primitive fathers of the church, were divided in their opinions on this subject. Some forbade Christians to read any of the heathen writers, on account of their bad tendency, both as to principles and morals. The Apostolical constitutions, as they are called, speak in this strain, "Ab omnibus gentilium libris abstine:" "abstain from all books of the Gentiles." And though these constitutions are not Apostolical, yet it is allowed on all hands, that they are very ancient. Cotelerius in a note on this passage, has shown the different sentiments of many of the Fathers: and it is probable that a majority of them were of opinion, the heathen writers might be read with advantage, under certain restrictions and regulations. Basil the great, has an oration, showing, "quomodo ex scriptis gentilium utilitatem capere debeamus:" "how we ought to reap advantage from the writings of the Gentiles." The most learned and pious among the moderns, have very universally condemned the practice of indiscriminately reading the writings of the heathens. On this subject, Erasmus complains in one of his letters, "pro christianis reddamur pagani." "Instead of Christians we are made Pagans." And again, "Animadverto," says he, "juvenes aliquot, quos nobis remittit Italia, præcipue Roma, nonnihil adflatos hoc veneno." "I observe some youths, returned from Italy, especially from Rome, infected with this poison." Buddei Isagoge, par. i. p. 147. Buddeus himself observes, after giving the opinions of several others, "Singulari utique hic opus esse circumspectione, negari nequit; cum facile contingat, ut qui ethnicorum scriptis toti veluti immerguntur, ethnicum, plane, alienumque a religione christiana, inde referant animum." "It cannot be denied that there is here need of singular cirumspection, as it easily happens, that they who are, as it were, wholly immersed in the writings of the heathens, return from them with a heathenish mind, alienated from the christian religion." He then gives several examples of the bad influence of this practice on the minds of men of great abilities and learning: to which we might add the name of a late celebrated historian; and perhaps many others of our nation. The danger arises from the fondness which these persons contract for the studied and regular composition manifest in these writings, and for the flowers of oratory with which they dress out their fables and false notions of things.

set before them. There being twenty-six *Germans* on board, members of the *Moravian* Church, Mr. Wesley immediately began to learn the *German* language, in order to converse with them; and David Nitchman, the *Moravian* bishop, and two others began to learn *English*, that they might enjoy the benefit of mutual conversation. He observes, that he now first preached *extempore*, though I believe he had done so once before in London. It was here that his acquaintance commenced with the *Moravian* brethren, which he cultivated for several years, with great assiduity and success; and we must allow that the knowledge he acquired by their means, laid the foundation of the great things which followed in the subsequent part of his life.

It was a maxim with Mr. Wesley in the conduct of life, that every part of the day ought to be filled up with some useful employment; a man unemployed, being in constant danger of falling into foolish temptations and hurtful habits, the best preservative from which is industry. He therefore so arranged his business that he had a stated employment for every part of the day. This love of regularity in the improvement of his time, immediately showed itself in his new situation. October 21, they sailed from *Gravesend*, and got into the *Downs*. "Now," says he, "we began to be a little regular. Our common way of living was this: from four in the morning till five, each of us used private prayer. From five till seven we read the Bible together, carefully comparing it (that we might not lean to our own understandings) with the writings of the earliest ages. At seven we breakfasted. At eight were the public prayers. From nine to twelve I usually learned *German*, and Mr. Delamotte, *Greek*. My brother writ sermons, and Mr. Ingham instructed the children. At twelve we met, to give an account to one another what we had done since our last meeting, and what we designed to do before our next. About one we dined. The time from dinner to four, we spent in reading to those of whom each of us had taken charge, or in speaking to them severally, as need required. At four were the evening prayers; when either the second lesson was explained (as it always was in the morning) or the children catechised, and instructed before the congregation. From five to six we again used private prayer. From six to seven I read in our cabin to two or three of the passengers (of whom there were about eighty English on board) and each of my brethren to a few more in theirs. At seven I joined with the *Germans* in their public service; while Mr. Ingham was reading between the decks, to as many as desired to hear. At eight we met again, to exhort and instruct one another. Between nine and ten we went to bed, where neither the roaring of the sea, nor the motion of the ship, could take away the refreshing sleep which God gave us."

This, no doubt, was prodigious labor; and yet it may be safely affirmed, that, during the fifty-five years and upwards, which followed, few days passed, in which, by one employment or other, the time was

not filled up with equal exactness and diligence. It has indeed been doubted whether the human mind be capable of such unremitted attention through a multiplicity of business, without injury. The words of Horace, "*Neque semper arcum tendit Apollo,*" have been quoted to show, that the mind ought not always to be on the stretch. But these words were not spoken with any allusion to this subject. We may observe also that varying our employment gives a considerable degree of relaxation to the mind. Every subject does not require the same stretch of thought; nor every kind of exercise the same degree of exertion.

The wind being contrary they did not sail from *Cowes* till the 10th of December.—On Thursday the 15th of January, 1736, complaint being made to Mr. Oglethorpe of the unequal distribution of water to the passengers, new officers were appointed, and the old ones were highly exasperated against Mr. Wesley, who, as they supposed, had made the complaint.—From the 17th to the 25th, they had violent storms, the sea going frequently over the ship, and breaking the cabin windows. On these occasions he found the fear of death brought him into some degree of bondage, and being a severe judge of himself he concluded, that he was unfit, because he was unwilling to die: at the same time he could not but observe the lively victorious faith which appeared in the *Germans*, and kept their minds in a state of tranquillity and ease, in the midst of danger, to which he and the English on board were strangers: speaking of these humble followers of Christ, he says, "I had long before observed the great seriousness of their behavior. Of their humility they had given a continual proof, by performing those servile offices for the other passengers which none of the English would undertake; for which they desired, and would receive no pay; saying, "It was good for their proud hearts, and their loving Saviour had done more for them." And every day had given them occasion of showing a meekness, which no injury could move. If they were pushed, struck, or thrown down, they rose again and went away; but no complaint was found in their mouth. There was now an opportunity of trying, whether they were delivered from the spirit of fear, as well as from that of pride, anger, and revenge. In the midst of the psalm wherewith their service began, the sea broke over, split the main-sail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if the great deep had already swallowed us up. A terrible screaming began among the English. The Germans calmly sung on. I asked one of them afterwards, "Was you not afraid?" He answered, "I thank God, No." I asked, "But were not your women and children afraid?" He replied mildly, "No; our women and children are not afraid to die."

On the 29th, they fell in with the skirts of a hurricane, which however did no damage; on the 4th of February, they saw land; and on the 6th, after a stormy passage first set foot on American ground,

on a small uninhabited island over against Tybee, where Mr. Oglethorpe led them to a rising ground and they returned God thanks, and then he took boat for Savannah.

During this passage Mr. Wesley's leading principle, that self-denial and mortification, were to him the chief means of holiness, showed itself powerfully in his conduct. Judging, as he observes, that it might be helpful to him, he discontinued the use of flesh and wine, and confined himself to vegetables, chiefly rice and biscuit. He also left off eating suppers, and his bed having been wet by the sea, he lay upon the floor, and slept sound till morning. He speaks with an air of triumph on this unexpected victory over the common indulgence of using a bed to sleep in; and adds, "I believe, I shall not find it needful to go to bed, as it is called, any more."

February 7, Mr. Oglethorpe returned from Savannah, with Mr. Spangenberg, one of the pastors of the Germans. "I soon found," says Mr. Wesley, "what spirit he was of; and asked his advice with regard to my own conduct. He said, "My brother, I must first ask you one or two questions. Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit, that you are the child of God?" I was surprised and knew not what to answer. He observed it, and asked, "Do you know Jesus Christ?" I paused and said, "I know he is the Saviour of the world." "True," replied he; "but do you know he has saved you?" I answered, "I hope he has died to save me." He only added, "Do you know yourself?" I said "I do." But I fear they were vain words.—On the 14th, some Indians came to them, and shook them by the hand, one of them saying, "I am glad you are come. When I was in England, I desired that some would speak the great word to me and my nation then desired to hear it; but now we are all in confusion. Yet I am glad you are come. I will go up and speak to the wise men of our nation: and I hope they will hear. But we would not be made Christians, as the Spaniards make Christians: we would be taught, before we are baptized."

The house at Savannah, where they were to reside, not being ready, Mr. Wesley with Mr. Delamotte, took up their lodgings with the Germans. Here they had an opportunity of being better acquainted with them, and of closely observing the whole of their behavior, from morning till night. Mr. Wesley gives them an excellent character. He tells us, "They were always employed, always cheerful themselves, and in good humor with one another. They had put away all anger, and strife, and wrath, and bitterness, and clamor, and evil-speaking. They walked worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called, and adorned the gospel of our Lord in all things." He adds, "Feb. 28. They met to consult concerning the affairs of their church. After several hours spent in conference and prayer, they proceeded to the election and ordination of a bishop. The great simplicity, as well as solemnity of the whole, almost made me forget the

seventeen hundred years between, and imagine myself in one of those assemblies where form and state were not; but *Paul* the tent-maker, or *Peter* the fisherman presided; yet with the demonstration of the spirit and of power."

Sunday, March 7. He entered on his ministry at Savannah, by preaching on the epistle for the day, being the 13th of the first of Corinthians. In the second lesson, Luke xviii. was our Lord's prediction of the treatment which he himself, and consequently his followers, was to meet with from the world. He adds, "Yet notwithstanding these plain declarations of our Lord; notwithstanding my own repeated experience; notwithstanding the experience of all the sincere followers of Christ, whom I have ever talked with, read, or heard of: nay and the reason of the thing, evincing to a demonstration, that all who love not the light must hate him who is continually laboring to pour it in upon them: I do here bear witness against myself, that when I saw the number of people crowding into the church, the deep attention with which they received the word, and the seriousness that afterwards sat on all their faces; I could scarce refrain from giving the lie to experience and reason and Scripture all together. I could hardly believe that the greater, the far greater part of this attentive serious people, would hereafter trample under foot that word, and say all manner of evil falsely of him that spake it."

On the 18th, Mr. Wesley wrote to his mother as follows: "I doubt not but you are already informed of the many blessings which God gave us in our passage; as my brother Wesley must before now, have received a particular account of the circumstances of our voyage; which he would not fail to transmit to you by the first opportunity.

"We are likely to stay here some months. The place is pleasant beyond imagination; and by all I can learn exceeding healthful,—even in summer, for those who are not intemperate. It has pleased God, that I have not had a moment's illness of any kind since I set my foot upon the continent: nor do I know any more than one of my seven hundred parishioners, who is sick at this time. Many of them indeed, are, I believe, very angry already: for a gentleman, no longer ago than last night, made a ball; but the public prayers happening to begin about the same time, the church was full, and the ball-room so empty, that the entertainment could not go forward.

"I should be heartily glad, if any poor and religious men or women of Epworth or Wroote, would come over to me. And so would Mr. Oglethorpe too: he would give them land enough, and provisions gratis, till they could live on the produce of it. I was fully determined to have wrote to my dear Emmy* to-day; but time will not permit. O hope ye still in God! for ye shall yet give him thanks, who is the help of your countenance, and your God! Renounce the

* His eldest sister Emelia.

world: deny yourselves: bear your cross with Christ, and reign with him! My brother Hooper too, has a constant place in our prayers. May the good God give him the same zeal for holiness which he has given to a young gentleman of Rotterdam, who was with me last night. Pray for us, and especially for, dear mother, your dutiful and affectionate son, John Wesley."

Mr. Wesley being now informed of the opposition which his brother Charles met with at Frederica; on the 22d of March, wrote to him the following letter—"How different are the ways wherein we are led, yet I hope toward the same end. I have hitherto no opposition at all: all is smooth, and fair and promising. Many seem to be awakened: all are full of respect and commendation. We cannot see any cloud gathering. But this calm cannot last; storms must come hither too: and let them come when we are ready to meet them.

"'Tis strange so many of our friends should still trust in God! I hope indeed, whoever turns to the world, Mr. Tackner and Betty, with Mr. Hird's family, and Mr. Burk, will zealously aim at the prize of their high calling. These especially I exhort by the mercies of God, that they be not weary of well-doing, but that they labor more and more to be meek and lowly, and daily to advance in the knowledge and love of God.—I hope too Mr. Weston, Mr. Moore, Mr. Allen, and Mr. White, as well as Mr. Ward and his wife, continue in the same wise resolutions. I must not forget Mr. Reed, and Mr. Daubry, both of whom I left fully determined to shake off every weight, and with all their might pursue the one thing needful.

"*Conciones omnes meas jamnunc habes, præter istas quas misi. Aliquæ in pyxide sunt* (*de quâ ne verbum scribis*) *unà cum bibliis in quarto. Liber de disciplinâ quam celerrime potes, remittendus est. Quanta est concordia fratrum: Tui volo et fratris B.?*" You have now all my sermons, except those which I have sent. Some are in the box (of which you say not a word) together with the Bible in quarto. The book of discipline must be sent back as soon as possible. How great is the concord of brethren: I mean of thee and brother B.?

"You are not, I think, at liberty *ςρέφεσθαι εἰς τὸ ἔθνη ἕως οἱ συμφυλέται σε, ἀπωθῆσί σε*," to turn to the Gentiles till your own countrymen shall cast you out. "If that period come soon, so much the better: only in the mean while, reprove and exhort with all authority, even though all men should despise thee. *'Αποβήσεταί σοι εἰς μαρτύριον.*" It shall turn to thee for a testimony.*

"I conjure you spare no time, no address or pains to learn the true cause *τῆς πάλαι ὀδύνης τῆς φίλης με*,"† of the former distress of my friend. "I much doubt you are in the right. *Μη γένοιτο ἵνα ἦτω πάλιν ἁμαρτάνῃ. Γρηγόρει, φυλάσσε, ὡς μάλιςα δύνῃ. Γράφε μοι, πῶς με δέῃ γράφειν πρὸς αὐτήν.*" God forbid, that she should again in like manner miss the mark.

* See the same phrase, Luke xxi. 13. † See a similar construction of *πάλαι* 2 Pet. i. 9.

Watch over her; keep her, as much as possible. Write to me, how I ought to write to her.

"If Mr. Ingham were here, I would try to see you. But omit no opportunity of writing. *Κινδυνεύω πᾶσαν ὥραν.*" I stand in jeopardy every hour.—"Let us be strong and very courageous; for the Lord our God is with us: and there is no counsel or might against him!"

Mr. Charles took the hint his brother gave him, and on the 28th, sent Mr. Ingham to Savannah.* April 4th, Mr. Wesley set out for Frederica, in a Pettiawga, a sort of flat-bottomed barge, and the following evening they anchored near Skidoway island, where the water at flood, was twelve or fourteen feet deep. Mr. Wesley wrapt himself up in a large cloak, and lay down on the quarter-deck: but in the course of the night he rolled out of his cloak, and fell into the sea, so fast asleep that he knew not where he was, till his mouth was full of water. He swam round to a boat, and got out without any injury, more than wetting his clothes. This instance gives us a lively view of his fortitude and presence of mind in the midst of surprise and danger.

Mr. Wesley left Frederica, and arrived at Savannah on the 20th. The next day he wrote to his brother; and among other things observes, "I still extremely pity poor Mrs. Hawkins: but what can I do more, till God show me who it is that continually exasperates her against me? Then I may perhaps be of some service to her: There is surely some one who does not play us fair: but I marvel not at the matter. He that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there is that is mightier than they—Yet a little while and God will declare who is sincere. Tarry thou the Lord's leisure and be strong, and he shall comfort thy heart."

On the same day he wrote to Mr. Oglethorpe, and tells him, "Savannah, never was so dear to me as now. I believe, knowing by whom I send, I may write as well as speak freely. I found so little, either of the form or power of religion at Frederica, that I am sincerely glad I am removed from it. Surely, never was any place, no not London itself, freer from one vice, I mean hypocrisy,

> '*O curvæ in terris animæ, et cœlestium inanes!*'"
> O grovelling souls, bent to the earth, and void of heavenly good!

"Jesus Master have mercy upon them—There is none of those who did run well, whom I pity more than Mrs. Hawkins: her treating me in such a manner would indeed have little affected me, had my own interests only been concerned. I have been used to be betrayed, scorned, and insulted by those I had most labored to serve. But when I reflect on her condition, my heart bleeds for her—Yet with Thee nothing is impossible!

* Vol. I. page 85.

"With regard to one who ought to be dearer to me than her, I cannot but say, that the more I think of it the more convinced I am, that no one, without a virtual renouncing of the faith, can abstain from the public as well as the private worship of God. All the prayers usually read morning and evening at Frederica and here, put together, do not last seven minutes. These cannot be termed long prayers: no christian assembly ever used shorter: neither have they any repetitions in them at all—If I did not speak thus plainly to you; which I fear no one else in England or America will do, I should by no means be worthy to call myself, Sir, Yours, &c. John Wesley."

Not finding as yet any open door for pursuing his main design of preaching to the Indians, he consulted with his companions, in what manner they might be most useful to the little flock at Savannah. It was agreed, 1. to advise the more serious among them, to form themselves into a little society, and to meet once or twice a week, in order to reprove, instruct, and exhort one another. 2. To select out of these a smaller number for a more intimate union with each other: which might be forwarded partly by their conversing singly with each, and inviting them all together to Mr. Wesley's house: and this accordingly they determined to do every Sunday in the afternoon. Here we see the first rudiments of the future economy of classes and bands, which has had no small influence in promoting the success of the Methodists beyond any other denomination of Christians, not immediately favored by the civil power.

There subsisted at this time, a dispute between the gentlemen of Carolina and Georgia, respecting the right of trading with the Indians. The dispute was brought into Westminster-Hall, and agitated on both sides with great animosity. Mr. Wesley had hitherto thought it his duty to confine himself to those things which immediately related to his office as a minister, and not to intermeddle with any thing that seemed foreign to it. But having considered the matter in debate, and the consequences of it to the province, he altered his sentiments, and on the 23d of July delivered his opinion on the subject in a letter to Mr. Hutcheson. He observes, "By what I have seen during my short stay here, I am convinced that I have long been under a great mistake, in thinking no circumstances could make it the duty of a christian priest, to do any thing else but preach the gospel. On the contrary, I am now satisfied, that there is a possible case wherein a part of his time ought to be employed in what *less* directly conduces to the glory of God, and peace and good will among men. And such a case, I believe is that which now occurs: there being several things which cannot so effectually be done without me; and which, though not directly belonging to my ministry, yet are by consequence of the highest concern to the success of it. It is from this conviction that I have taken some pains to inquire into the great controversy now subsisting between Carolina and Georgia; and in

examining and weighing the letters wrote, and the argument urged, on both sides of the question. And I cannot but think that the whole affair might be clearly stated in few words. A charter was past a few years since, establishing the bounds of this province, and empowering the trustees therein named to prepare laws, which when ratified by the king in council, should be of force within those bounds. Those Trustees have prepared a law, which has been so ratified, for the regulation of the Indian trade, requiring that none should trade with the Indians who are within this province, till he is so licensed as therein specified. Notwithstanding this law, the governing part of Carolina, have asserted both in conversation, in writing, and in the public newspapers, that it is lawful for any one not so licensed, to trade with the Creek, Cherokee, or Chickasaw Indians: they have past an ordinance, not only asserting the same, but enacting that men and money shall be raised to support such traders; and in fact they have themselves licensed and sent up such traders both to the Creek and Chicasaw Indians.

"This is the plain matter of fact: now as to matter of right, when twenty more reams of paper have been spent upon it, I cannot but think it must come to this short issue at last: 1. Are the Creeks, Cherokees, and Chickasaws, within the bounds of Georgia or no? 2. Is an act of the king in council in pursuance of an act of parliament, of any force within these bounds, or not? That all other inquiries are absolutely foreign to the question a very little consideration will show. As to the former of these, the Georgian charter compared with any map of these parts which I have ever seen, determines it: the latter I never heard made a question of, but in the neighborhood of Carolina.

"Mr. Johnson's brother has been with us some days. I have been twice in company with him at Mr. Oglethorpe's: and I hope there are in Carolina, though the present proceeding would almost make one doubt it, many such gentlemen as he seems to be; men of good nature, good manners, and understanding. I hope God will repay you seven-fold for the kindness you have shown to my poor mother, and in her to, sir, your most obliged, most obedient servant, John Wesley."

At the same time he wrote to Mr. Vernon on the same subject. "As short a time," says he, "as I have for writing, I could not pardon myself if I did not spend some part of it in acknowledging the continuance of your goodness to my mother: which indeed neither she, nor I, can ever lose the sense of.

"The behavior of the people of Carolina, finds much conversation for this place. I dare not say whether they want honesty or logic most; it is plain a very little of the latter, added to the former, would show how utterly foreign to the point in question, all their voluminous defences are. Here is an act of the king in council, past in pursuance of an act of parliament, forbidding unlicensed persons to trade with the Indians in Georgia. Nothing therefore can justify them in

daily sending unlicensed traders to the Creek, Cherokee, and Chicasaw Indians, but the proving either that this act is of no force, or that those Indians are not in Georgia. Why then are these questions so little considered by them, and others so largely discussed? I fear for a very plain, though not a very honest reason; that is, to puzzle the cause. I sincerely wish you all happiness in time and eternity, and am, sir," &c.

Sept. 13. He began reading over, with Mr. Delamotte, Bishop Beveridge's Pandectæ Canonum Conciliorum. "Nothing," says he, "could so effectually have convinced me, that both particular and general councils may err, and have erred: and of the infinite difference there is between the decisions of the wisest men, and those of the Holy Ghost recorded in his word."—Sept. 20. They ended the Apostolical canons so called, and Mr. Wesley acknowledges in his printed Journal, that he once thought more highly of them than he ought to think. "Bishop Beveridge," says he, "observes, that they are the decrees of the several Synods, which met at several places, and on several occasions, in the second and third age after Christ; and are therefore called Apostolical, because partly grounded upon, and partly agreeing with the traditions they had received from the Apostles. He further observes, that as they were enacted by different Synods, so they were collected by different persons; till about the year 500, John, Bishop of Constantinople, placed them at the head of the canons which he collected into one code.—But then he adds (Cod. Canon. p. 159,) they contain that discipline which was used in the church when they were collected, not when the council of Nice met, for then many parts of them were useless and obsolete."

After Mr. Charles had left Frederica, and gone for England in the latter end of July, Mr. Wesley often visited that place; where he met with the most violent opposition, and the most illiberal abuse. He still however persevered in his endeavors to do them good, and on the 13th of October set out from Savannah, once more to visit them. He arrived at Frederica on the morning of the 16th, and met Mr. Hird on the Bluff, who gave him a melancholy account of the state of things there.* The public service had been discontinued; and from that time every thing was grown worse and worse—"Even poor Miss Sophy,"† says he, "was scarce the shadow of what she was when I left

* Mr. Wesley's private Journal. See also his printed Journal in his Works, vol. xxvi. p. 149.

† This person was Miss Sophy Causton, afterwards Mrs. Williamson, niece to Mr. Causton, storekeeper and chief magistrate of Savannah. After her marriage she was the occasion of so much trouble to Mr. Wesley, that it evidently hastened his departure out of America. He has observed a silence in his printed Journal on some circumstances of this affair, which has induced many persons to suspect the propriety of his conduct in this business. He has however been more open in his private Journal, which was written at the time, as the circumstances arose. And as this private Journal and his other papers, lay open to the inspection of his friends for several years, I cannot help thinking that it would have been more candid, and more to the reputation of themselves and Mr. Wesley,

her. I endeavored to convince her of it, but in vain: and to put it effectually out of my power so to do, she was resolved to return to England immediately. I was at first a little surprised; but I soon recollected my spirits, and remembered my calling. Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

"Non me, qui cætera, vincet
Impetus; at rapido contrarius evehar orbi."

The force shall not overcome me, that overcomes all things else;
But I shall mount in a direction contrary to the rapid world.

"I began with earnestly crying to God to maintain his own cause; and then reading to a few who came to my house in the evenings, one of Ephrem Syrus's exhortations, as I did every night after, and by the blessing of God not without effect. My next step was, to divert Miss Sophy from the fatal resolution of going to England. After several fruitless attempts I at length prevailed; nor was it long before she recovered the ground she had lost.

"October 23. Mr. Oglethorpe returned from the southward. I was in the fort with Mr. Horton, when he came. He ran to Mr. Horton, kissed him, and expressed much kindness to him, but took no notice of me good or bad; any more than if I had not been in the room. I was not surprised, having long expected it; when I mentioned it to Miss Sophy, she said; 'Sir, you encouraged me in my greatest trials: be not discouraged yourself. Fear nothing: if Mr. Oglethorpe will not, God will help you.'

"October 25. I took boat for Savannah, with Miss Sophy; and came thither, after a slow and dangerous, but not a tedious passage, on Sunday the 31st.*

I insert the following story, because it seems well authenticated, and because it may be the means of putting young persons upon their guard against the arts, and persuasive words of designing and unprincipled men. November 12, says Mr. Wesley, "By a careful inquiry of several persons, I came to the full knowledge of a strange piece of history. Mr. T. a surgeon of Edinburgh debauched the daughter of one Mr. Ure, a lawyer, an only child, and distant relation. He then persuaded her to sign a writing which she had never read, and to go over with him to America. When she came hither, he treated her as a common servant; and not only so, but beat her frequently to such a degree that the scars made by the whip were plainly to be seen a year after. The fault commonly was, that the child she had by him

to have openly avowed the fact, that he did intend to marry Miss Causton, and was not a little pained when *she* broke off the connection with him. From a careful perusal of his private Journal, this appears to me to have been the case. But I will fairly state the evidence on which my opinion is founded, in his own words as they occur, and leave the reader to judge for himself: not doubting at the same time, that, whatever may be said of his weakness (and who is not weak in some thing or other) or of his prudence in this affair, nothing can be laid to his charge in point of criminality.

* See also his printed Journal in his Works, vol. xxvi. p. 150.

cried. After he had kept her thus for about two years, and she had brought him another child, he married another woman, and sold her to one of the Indian traders! The facts he allowed and defended before Mr. Oglethorpe (only he said he had given, not sold her) who, after a full hearing, determined that she should be set at liberty to work for herself and the child." This was a poor recompense for such accumulated injuries. If Mr. Oglethorpe had the power, he certainly ought to have laid a fine upon the man, sufficient to have maintained the woman and the child. Mr. Wesley proceeds. "Nov. 23. Mr. Oglethorpe sailed for England.—In the beginning of December, I advised Miss Sophy to sup earlier, and not immediately before she went to bed. She did so; and on this little circumstance, what an inconceivable train of consequences depend! Not only, 'All the color of remaining life,' for her; but perhaps all my happiness too!"

Feb. 5, 1737. "One of the most remarkable dispensations of Providence towards me, which I have yet known, began to show itself this day. For many days after I could not at all judge which way the scale would turn: nor was it fully determined till March 4th, on which God commanded me to pull out my right eye; and by his grace I determined so to do: but being slack in the execution, on Saturday, March 12, God being very merciful to me, my friend performed what I could not.*

"I have often thought, one of the most difficult commands that ever was given, was that given to Ezekiel concerning his wife. But the difficulty of obeying such a direction, appeared to me now more than ever before: when, considering the character I bore, I could not but perceive that the word of the Lord was come to me likewise, saying, "Son of man, behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn, nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down."

Feb. 24. It was agreed that Mr. Ingham should go for England, and endeavor, if it should please God, to bring over some of their friends to strengthen their hands in his work. By him, Mr. Wesley wrote to Mr. Oglethorpe; and this letter shows both his zeal and entire openness of heart, in pursuing and inculcating without fear, what he deemed most excellent. It is as follows: "Sir, You apprehended strong opposition before you went hence; and unless we are misinformed, you have found it. Yesterday morning, I read a letter from London, wherein it was asserted, that Sir Robert had turned against you; that the parliament was resolved to make a severe scrutiny into all that has been transacted here; that the cry of the nation ran the same way; and that even the trustees were so far from acknowledging the service you have done, that they had protested your bills, and charged you with misapplying the moneys you had received, and with gross mismanagement of the power wherewith you was intrusted—

* On March the 12th Miss Sophy married Mr. Williamson.

Whether these things are so, or no, I know not; for it is ill depending on a single evidence. But this I know, that if your scheme was drawn (which I shall not easily believe) from that first-born of hell, *Nicholas Machiavel*,* as sure as there is a God that governs the earth, he will confound both it and you. If on the contrary (as I shall hope, till strong proof appear) your heart was right before God; that it was your real design to promote the glory of God, by promoting peace and love among men; let not your heart be troubled: the God whom you serve is able to deliver you. Perhaps in some things you have shown you are but a man: perhaps I myself may have a little to complain of: but O what a train of benefits have I received to lay in the balance against it! I bless God that you was born. I acknowledge his exceeding mercy, in casting me into your hands. I own your generous kindness all the time we were at sea: I am indebted to you for a thousand favors here: why then, the least I can say is, though all men should revile you, yet, if God shall strengthen me, will not I: Yea, were it not for the poor creatures, whom you have as yet but half redeemed from their complicated misery, I could almost wish that you were forsaken of all; that you might clearly see the difference, between men of honor, and those who are in the very lowest rank, the followers of Christ Jesus.

"O! where is the God of Elijah? Stir up thy strength and come and help him! If the desire of his heart be to thy name, let all his enemies flee before him! Art Thou not He who hast made him a father to the fatherless, a mighty deliverer to the oppressed! Hast Thou not given him to be, feet to the lame, hands to the helpless, eyes to the blind! Hath he ever withheld his bread from the hungry, or hid his soul from his own flesh! Then, whatever Thou withholdest from him, O Thou lover of men, satisfy his soul with thy likeness: renew his heart in the whole image of thy Christ: purge his spirit from self-will, pride, vanity, and fill it with faith and love, gentleness and long-suffering. Let no guile ever be found in his mouth; no injustice in his hands!—And among all your labors of love, it becomes me earnestly to entreat him, that He will not forget those you have

* Nicholas Machiavel, was born of a distinguished family at Florence. Of all his writings, a political treatise entitled the Prince, has made the greatest noise in the world. Mr. Wesley speaks thus of it; "If all the other doctrines of devils which have been committed to writing since letters were in the world, were collected together in one volume, it would fall short of this: and that should a prince form himself by this book, so calmly recommending hypocrisy, treachery, lying, robbery, oppression, adultery, whoredom, and murder of all kinds; *Domitian* or *Nero* would be an angel of light compared with that man."—The world is not agreed as to the motive of this work; some thinking he meant to recommend tyrannical maxims; others, that he only delineated them to excite abhorrence. Harrington considers Machiavel, as a superior genius, and as the most excellent writer on politics and government that ever appeared. Some have said, his greatest fault was, that he told the world what bad princes did, not what they ought to do; and that his principles, though daily condemned, are daily put in practice. It has also been said, that he took his political maxims from the government of the Popes. He died in 1530.

gone through for, sir, your obliged and obedient servant, John Wesley."

By Mr. Ingham, he also wrote to Dr. Bray's associates, who had sent a parochial library to Savannah.* It was expected of the ministers who received these libraries, that they should send an account to their benefactors, of the method they used in catechising the children, and instructing the youth of their respective parishes. That part of his letter was as follows—"Our general method of catechising, is this; a young gentleman who came with me, teaches between thirty and forty children, to read, write and cast accounts. Before school in the morning, and after school in the afternoon, he catechises the lowest class, and endeavors to fix something of what was said in their understandings, as well as in their memories. In the evening he instructs the larger children. On Saturday in the afternoon I catechise them all. The same I do on Sunday before the evening-service: and in the church immediately after the second lesson, a select number of them having repeated the catechism, and been examined in some part of it, I endeavor to explain at large, and enforce that part, both on them and the congregation.

"Some time after the evening-service, as many of my parishioners as desire it, meet at my house (as they do also on Wednesday evening) and spend about an hour in prayer, singing, and mutual exhortation. A smaller number, mostly those who design to communicate the next day, meet here on Saturday evening: and a few of these come to me on the other evenings, and pass half an hour in the same employment."

March 4. Mr. Wesley wrote to the Trustees for Georgia, giving them an account of his expenses from March 1, 1736, to March 1. 1737, which deducting extraordinary expenses for repairing the parsonage-house, journies to Frederica, &c. amounted for himself and Mr. Delamotte, to forty-four pounds, four shillings, and four-pence. At the same time he accepted of the fifty pounds a year, sent by the

* Dr. Thomas Bray, was born at Marton, in Shropshire, in the year 1656, and educated at Oxford. He was at length presented to the vicarage of Over-Whitacre, in Warwickshire; and in 1690, to the rectory of Sheldon, where he composed his Catechetical Lectures, which procured him such reputation, that Dr. Compton, Bishop of London, pitched upon him as a proper person to model the infant Church of Maryland; and for that purpose he was invested with the office of Commissary. He now engaged in several noble undertakings. He procured sums to be raised for purchasing small libraries, for the use of the poor ministers in the several parts of our plantations: and the better to promote this design, he published two books; one, entitled Bibliotheca Parochialis, or a scheme of such theological and other heads, as seem requisite to be perused or occasionally consulted by the clergy, together with a catalogue of books which may be profitably read on each of those points; the other, Apostolical Charity, its nature and excellency considered. He endeavored to get a fund established for the propagation of the Gospel, especially among the uncultivated Indians; and by his means a patent was obtained for erecting the corporation called, The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. He, by his industry, procured relief for prisoners; and formed the plan of the society for the reformation of manners, charity-schools, &c. He wrote 1. his Martyrology, or Papal usurpation, in one volume folio. 2 Directorium Missionarium; and other works. He died in 1730.

Society for his maintenance, which, however, was in a manner forced upon him, as he had formed a resolution not to accept of it, saying his Fellowship was sufficient for him. On this occasion his brother Samuel expostulated with him, and showed him that by refusing it, he might injure those who should come after him: and if he did not want it for himself, he might give it away in such manner as he thought proper. He at length yielded to the solicitations of the Society, and the advice of his friends.

It appears to me, that the affair between Mr. Wesley, and Miss Sophy Causton, was this day finally broken off; and that he refers to this circumstance in the following paragraph in his printed Journal; "From the direction I received from God this day; touching an affair of the last importance, I cannot but observe, as I have done many times before, the entire mistake of many good men, who assert, 'That God will not answer your prayer unless your heart be wholly resigned to his will.' My heart was not wholly resigned to his will; therefore I durst not depend on my own judgment: and for this very reason, I cried to him the more earnestly to supply what was wanting in me. And I know, and am assured, that he heard my voice, and did send forth his light and his truth."

He proceeds in his private Journal, in reference to the same affair. "March 7. When I walked with Mr. Causton, to his country-lot, I plainly felt, that had God given me such a retirement, with the companion I desired, I should have forgot the work for which I was born, and have set up my rest in this world. March 8. Miss Sophy engaged herself to Mr. Williamson—and on Saturday, the 12th, they were married at *Purrysburgh:* this being the day which completed the year from my first speaking to her. What thou doest, O God, I know not now; but I shall know hereafter."

Whether the lady's patience was exhausted by Mr. Wesley's slow procedure in the business (as it does not appear that he was in any haste to finish it) or, whether she declined entering into the connubial state with him, on account of his abstemious and rigid manner of life, is uncertain: but whatever was the cause, it is evident from his own words, that he felt a disappointment when she married Mr. Williamson. It seems, that he expressed this more fully in a letter to his brother Samuel, who tells him in his answer, "I am sorry you are disappointed in one match, because you are very unlikely to find another."—It was not long however, before he saw sufficient cause to be thankful, that Providence had not permitted him to choose for himself. He had frequent occasions of discovering, that Mrs. Williamson was not that strictly religious character which he had supposed. On one of these occasions, near three months after her marriage, he writes thus, "God has showed me yet more, of the greatness of my deliverance, by opening to me a new and unexpected scene of Miss Sophy's dissimulation. O never give me over to my own heart's desires; nor let me follow my own imaginations!"

The things Mr. Wesley now passed through, gave him a more perfect knowledge of his own heart, and of human nature in general, than he had before acquired, which amply repaid him for the disappointment he had suffered. He still pursued his labors with unremitting diligence, and observed the greatest punctuality in answering the letters from his friends. March 29. He wrote to Mrs. Chapman, a religious acquaintance in England, with whom he held a correspondence. This letter will be a sufficient answer to an objection, often made against him at this time, that he thought cheerfulness inconsistent with religion——"True friendship," says he, "is doubtless stronger than death, else yours could never have subsisted still, in spite of all opposition, and even after thousands of miles are interposed between us.

"In the last proof you gave of it, there are a few things which I think it lies on me to mention: as to the rest, my brother is the proper person to clear them up, as I suppose he has done long ago.

"You seem to apprehend, that I believe religion to be inconsistent with cheerfulness, and with a sociable friendly temper. So far from it, that I am convinced, as true religion or holiness, cannot be without cheerfulness, so steady cheerfulness, on the other hand, cannot be without holiness or true religion. And I am equally convinced, that religion has nothing sour, austere, unsociable, unfriendly in it: but, on the contrary, implies the most winning sweetness, the most amiable softness* and gentleness. Are you for having as much cheerfulness as you can? So am I. Do you endeavor to keep alive your taste for all the truly innocent pleasures of life? So do I likewise. Do you refuse no pleasure, but what is a hindrance to some greater good, or has a tendency to some evil? It is my very rule: and I know no other by which a sincere reasonable Christian can be guided. In particular, I pursue this rule in eating, which I seldom do without much pleasure. And this I know is the will of God concerning me; that I should enjoy every pleasure, that leads to my taking pleasure in him; and in such a measure as most leads to it. I know that, as to every action which is naturally pleasing, it is his will that it should be so: therefore in taking that pleasure so far as it tends to this end (of taking pleasure in God) I do his will. Though therefore that pleasure be in some sense distinct from the love of God, yet is the taking of it by no means distinct from his will. No; you say yourself, 'It is his will I should take it.' And here indeed is the hinge of the question, which I had once occasion to state in a letter to you; and more largely in a sermon on the love of God. If you will read over those, I believe you will find, you differ from Mr. Law and me, in words only. You say, the pleasures you plead for are

* Softness is an equivocal term: but Mr. Wesley does not here mean effeminacy, which the christian religion forbids, and which he always discouraged both by his words and actions.

distinct from the love of God, as the cause from the effect. Why then they tend to it; and those which are only thus distinct from it, no one excepts against. The whole of what he affirms, and that not on the authority of men, but from the words and example of God incarnate, is, there is one thing needful, To do the will of God, and his will is our sanctification; our renewal in the image of God, in faith and love, in all holiness and happiness. On this we are to fix our single eye, at all times, and in all places: for so did our Lord: this one thing we are to do; for so did our fellow-servant Paul; after his example, 'Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God.' In other words, we are to do nothing but what, directly or indirectly, leads to our holiness, which is his glory, and to do every such thing with this design, and in such a measure as may most promote it.

"I am not mad, my dear friend, for asserting these to be the words of truth and soberness: neither are any of those, either in England or here, who have hitherto attempted to follow me. I am, and must be an example to my flock: not indeed in my prudential rules; but in some measure (if, giving God the glory, I may dare to say so,) in my spirit, and life, and conversation. Yet all of them are, in your sense of the word, unlearned, and most of them of low understanding: and still not one of them has been as yet, entangled in any case of conscience which was not solved. And as to the nice distinctions you speak of, it is you, my friend, it is the wise, the learned, the disputers of this world, who are lost in them, and bewildered more and more, the more they strive to extricate themselves. We have no need of nice distinctions, for I exhort all—Dispute with none. I feed my brethren in Christ, as he giveth me power, with the pure unmixed milk of his word. And those who are as little children receive it, not as the word of man, but as the word of God. Some grow thereby, and advance apace in peace and holiness: 'they grieve, 't is true, for those who did run well, but are now turned back; and they fear for themselves, lest they also be tempted: yet through the mercy of God they despair not, but have still a good hope that they shall endure to the end. Not that this hope has any resemblance to enthusiasm, which is a hope to attain the end without the means; this they know is impossible, and therefore ground their hope on a constant, careful use of all the means. And if they keep in this way, with lowliness, patience, and meekness of resignation, they cannot carry the principle of pressing toward perfection too far. O may you, and I, carry it far enough! Be fervent in spirit! Rejoice evermore! Pray without ceasing! In every thing give thanks! Do every thing in the name of the Lord Jesus! Abound more and more in all holiness, and in zeal for every good word and work!"

Before Mr. Wesley left Frederica, in January, where his brother had suffered so much, the opposition of some ill-minded and desperate

persons rose to a degree of violence hardly credible; so that his life was in danger several times. Every species of defamation, likely to prejudice the people against him, was propagated with diligence. The worst constructions, which malignity itself could invent, were put upon his actions, and reported as facts: it even seems that the giving away his own private income in acts of charity, was construed into embezzlement of the society's money. Mr. Wesley did not doubt, but men capable of such baseness, would represent the matter in this light to the trustees. He therefore wrote to them on the subject, and received the following answer from Dr. Burton; which, as it shows the confidence the trustees had in his uprightness and integrity, and their approbation of his conduct, I shall insert.

"*Georgia Office, June* 15*th.*

"Dear Sir,

"I communicated your letter to the Board this morning. We are surprised at your apprehensions of being charged with the very imputation of having embezzled any public or private monies. I cannot learn any ground for even suspicion of anything of this kind. We never heard of any accusation; but on the contrary, are persuaded both of your frugality and honesty. We beg you not to give weight to reports or private insinuations. The trustees have a high esteem of your good services, and on all occasions will give further encouragement: and would not have the express mention of the fifty pounds, in lieu of the same sum formerly advanced by the society for propagation so understood, as not to admit of enlargement upon proper occasions. I am ordered by all the members present to acquaint you of this, and to give you assurance of their approbation of your conduct, and readiness to assist you. The V. Prov. of Eton has given you ten pounds, for your private use and doing works of charity: I have desired Mr. Oglethorpe, to convey this to you in a private way. Mr. Whitefield, will shortly, and by the next convenient opportunity go over to Georgia. There are three hundred acres granted to the church in Frederica. Be not discouraged by many hasty insinuations; but hope the best while many labor for the best. In good time matters will bear a better face. God strengthen your hands, and give efficacy to your honest endeavors. In a former letter I spoke my mind at large to you concerning many particulars. I am in much haste at present,

"Your affectionate friend,

"J. Burton."

P. S. "My Lord Egmont gives his respects and kind wishes, and begs you not to be discouraged."

Mr. Causton, the chief magistrate of Savannah, seems to have been of a warm and rather violent temper, impatient of contradiction, over-bearing, and fickle in his attachments. He had hitherto,

not only shown a decent civility towards Mr. Wesley, but even a friendly regard for him. This regard seemed increased during a fever he had in the end of June, in which Mr. Wesley attended him every day.—On the third of July, Mr. Wesley reproved Mrs. Williamson for some things he thought wrong in her conduct. The reproof was resented by the lady, who said, *she did not expect such usage from him.* This was the beginning of strife, which as the wise man tells us, "is as when one letteth out water." The next day, Mrs. Causton called, and apologizing for the behavior of her niece, desired Mr. Wesley to inform Mrs. Williamson in writing what he had to object against her conduct. He accordingly wrote to her on the 5th, and here the matter rested for a few weeks. In the meantime, however, Mrs. Williamson miscarried, and Mrs. Causton reported that the miscarriage was occasioned by Mr. Wesley's reproof, and the letter he had sent: but Mrs. Williamson frankly acknowledged that, her husband having been sick, it was occasioned by the hurry and anxiety his sickness had produced. During this time Mr. Causton showed the same friendly attention to Mr. Wesley, as if nothing had happened. On this occasion Mr. Wesley writes in his private journal; "July 23. The strange esteem which Mr. Causton seemed to show for us, by which means we had nothing without but ease and plenty, occasioned my expressing myself thus in a letter to a friend; 'How to attain the being crucified with Christ, I find not; being in a condition which I neither desired nor expected in America: in ease and honor, and abundance. A strange school for him who has but one business, *Γυμνάζειν σεαυτὸν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν.*'" *

In the beginning of August, he joined with the Germans in one of their love-feasts. This, I believe, was the first time he ever saw a love-feast. He speaks thus of it: "It was begun and ended with thanksgiving and prayer, and celebrated in so decent and solemn a manner, as a Christian of the apostolic age, would have allowed to be worthy of Christ." He afterwards adopted love-feasts into the economy of Methodism.

August 7. Mr. Wesley repelled Mrs. Williamson from the holy communion, for the reasons specified in his letter of the 5th of July, as well as, for not giving him notice of her design to communicate, after having discontinued it for some time. On the 9th, a warrant having been issued and served upon him, he was carried before the Recorder and magistrates. Mr. Williamson's charge was, 1. That Mr. Wesley had defamed his wife: 2. That he had causelessly repelled her from the holy communion. The first charge Mr. Wesley denied; and the second, being purely ecclesiastical, he would not acknowledge the magistrate's power to interrogate him concerning it. He was told, that he must, however, appear at the next court holden for Savannah. In the mean time Mr. Causton, having become Mr.

* To exercise himself unto godliness.

Wesley's bitter enemy, required him to assign his reasons in writing for repelling his niece. This he accordingly did, in the following letter to Mrs. Williamson. "At Mr. Causton's request I write once more. The rules whereby I proceed are these: So many as intend to partake of the holy communion, shall signify their names to the curate, at least some time the day before. This you did not do.

"And if any of these—have done any wrong to his neighbor by word or deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended, the curate shall advertise him, that in any wise he presume not to come to the Lord's table, until he hath openly declared himself to have truly repented.

"If you offer yourself at the Lord's table on Sunday, I will advertise you, as I have done more than once, wherein you have done wrong: and when you have openly declared yourself to have truly repented, I will administer to you the mysteries of God."

On the 12th of August, and the following days, Mr. Causton read to as many as he conveniently could, all the letters Mr. Wesley had written to himself, or Miss Sophy, from the beginning of their acquaintance: not indeed throughout, but selecting certain passages, which might, being detached from the rest, and aided by a comment which he supplied, make an impression to Mr. Wesley's disadvantage. Such methods as these, of oppressing an individual, are detestable; and yet they have too often been practised, even by persons professing religion; but they always afford sure evidence of a bad cause.

While Mr. Causton was thus employed, the rest of the family were assiduous in their endeavors to convince all to whom they spake, that Mr. Wesley had repelled Mrs. Williamson from the communion out of revenge, because she had refused to marry him. "I sat still at home," says Mr. Wesley, "and I thank God, easy, having committed my cause to him: and remembering his word, 'Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.' I was at first afraid, that those who were weak in the faith would be turned out of the way, at least so far as to neglect the public worship, by attending which they were likely to suffer in their temporal concerns. But I feared where no fear was: God took care of this likewise; insomuch that on Sunday the 14th, more were present at the morning prayers, than had been for some months before. Many of them observed those words in the first lesson, 'Set Naboth on high among the people: and set two men, sons of Belial before him, to bear witness against him.' No less remarkable were those in the evening lesson, 'I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.' O may I ever be able to say with Micaiah, 'What the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak: and that, though I too

should be put into prison, and fed there, with bread of affliction, and with water of affliction.' "

August 16. At the request of several of the communicants, he drew up a short relation of the case, and read it after the evening prayers in the open congregation. And this evening, as Mr. Wesley supposed, Mrs. Williamson was prevailed upon to swear to, and sign a paper, containing many assertions and insinuations injurious to his character.—During the whole of this week, Mr. Causton was employed in preparing those who were to form the grand-jury at the next court-day. He was talking with some or other of them day and night: his table was free to all: old misunderstandings were forgot, and nothing was too much to be done for them, or promised to them. Monday, the twenty-second, the court was formed, and forty-four jurors were sworn in, instead of fifteen, to be a grand-jury to find the bills. This was done by Mr. Causton, who hereby showed his skill in the management of a controversy like this. He knew well, that numbers would add weight to every thing they transacted, and induce them to take bolder steps, than a few would venture upon. To this grand-jury, he gave a long and earnest charge, "to beware of spiritual tyranny, and to oppose the new illegal authority, which was usurped over their consciences." Mrs. Williamson's affidavit was read; and he then delivered to them a paper, entitled a List of Grievances, *presented by the* grand-jury for Savannah, this day of August, 1737. In the afternoon Mrs. Williamson was examined, who acknowledged that she had no objections to make against Mr. Wesley's conduct before her marriage. The next day Mr. and Mrs. Causton were also examined, when she confessed, that it was by her request Mr. Wesley had written to Mrs. Williamson on the 5th of July: and Mr. Causton declared, that if Mr. Wesley had asked his consent to have married his niece, he should not have refused it.—The grand-jury continued to examine these ecclesiastical grievances, which occasioned warm debates, till Thursday; when Mr. Causton being informed they were entered on matters beyond his instructions, went to them, and behaved in such a manner, that he turned forty-two, out of the forty-four, into a fixed resolution to inquire into his whole behavior. They immediately entered on that business, and continued examining witnesses all day on Friday. On Saturday, Mr. Causton finding all his efforts to stop them ineffectual, he adjourned the court till Thursday, the first of September, and spared no pains in the mean time, to bring them to another mind. September 1. He so far prevailed, that the majority of the grand-jury returned the list of grievances to the court, in some particulars altered, under the form of two presentments, containing ten bills, only two of which related to the affair of Mrs. Williamson; and only one of these was cognizable by that court, the rest being merely ecclesiastical. September 2, Mr. Wesley addressed the court to this

effect; "As to nine of the ten indictments against me, I know this court can take no cognizance of them; they being matters of an ecclesiastical nature, and this not an ecclesiastical court. But the tenth, concerning my speaking and writing to Mrs. Williamson, is of a secular nature: and this therefore I desire may be tried here, where the facts complained of were committed." Little answer was made, and that purely evasive.

In the afternoon he moved the court again, for an immediate trial at Savannah; adding, "That those who are offended may clearly see whether I have done any wrong to any one; or whether I have not rather deserved the thanks of Mrs. Williamson, Mr. Causton, and of the whole family." Mr. Causton's answer was full of civility and respect. He observed, "Perhaps things would not have been carried so far, had you not said, you believed if Mr. Causton appeared, the people would tear him in pieces; not so much out of love to you, as out of hatred to him for his abominable practices." If Mr. Wesley really spake these words, he was certainly very imprudent, considering the circumstances in which he was placed. But we too often find in disputes, that the constructions of others on what has been said, are reported as the very words we have spoken; which I suspect to have been the case here. Mr. Causton, however, has sufficiently discovered the motives that influenced his conduct in this business.

Twelve of the grand-jurors now drew up a protest against the proceedings of the majority, to be immediately sent to the trustees in England. In this paper they gave such clear and satisfactory reasons, under every bill, for their dissent from the majority, as effectually did away all just ground of complaint against Mr. Wesley, on the subjects of the prosecution.—As Mr. and Mrs. Williamson intended to go for England in the first ship that should sail; some of Mr. Wesley's friends thought, he ought to go likewise; chiefly to prevent or remove the bad impressions which misrepresentation and ill-natured report, might make on the trustees and others, interested in the welfare of the colony. But September 10, he observes, "I laid aside the thoughts of going to England; thinking it more suitable to my calling, still to commit my cause to God, and not to be in haste to justify myself: only, to be always ready to give to any that should ask me, a reason of the hope that is in me."

Immoderate zeal is always to be suspected; especially when it appears in pursuing such measures as tend to injure or ruin an individual. A bad cause, which originated from hatred or malice, will almost always be carried on with more intemperate zeal, and bolder measures, than a consciousness of acting right will ever produce. The pursuit of any end in view, when governed by the passions, is always more violent than when directed by reason and truth. On this principle we may account for the proceedings of the magistrates

of Savannah. They sent the affidavit they had procured, and the two presentments of the grand-jury, to be inserted in the newspapers in different parts of America. The only purpose this could answer was, to injure Mr. Wesley in the opinion of a large body of people, who could not easily come at a true knowledge of the case. That these advertisements might make a deeper impression on the minds of the multitude, the pomp of legal form was preserved; the following words being added at the end of each bill, "CONTRARY TO THE PEACE OF OUR SOVEREIGN LORD THE KING, HIS CROWN AND DIGNITY." Persons of discernment saw through the artifice, and in the end of September, Mr. Wesley received a letter from a gentleman of considerable abilities and learning in Charlestown, in which are the following observations. "I am much concerned at some reports and papers concerning you from Georgia. The papers contain some affidavits made against you, by one Mrs. Williamson; and a parcel of stuff called presentments of you by the grand-jury, for matters chiefly of your mere office as a clergyman. Has our sovereign lord the king, given the temporal courts in Georgia, ecclesiastical jurisdiction? If he has not, then sure I am, that, whatever your failings in your office may be, a grand jury's presentments of them, being repugnant to the fundamental laws and constitution of England, is a plain 'breach of his peace,' and an open insult on 'his crown and dignity;' for which they themselves ought to be presented, if they have not incurred a *premunire.** The presentments, a sad pack of nonsense, I have seen; but not the affidavits. They were both designed to have been published in our Gazette, but our friends here have hitherto prevented it. I shall be glad to have some light from yourself into these matters, and wherewith to oppose the reports industriously spread here to your disadvantage; mean time, I remain your most obedient humble servant,

"S. GARDEN."

Mr. Wesley received some consolatory letters from those of his friends, to whom he had represented his situation. A letter of this kind, from Dr. Cutler, a clergyman at Boston, contains some thoughts so just, and not very commonly to be met with, that I think it worthy of a place here. It is dated the twenty-second of October. "I am sorry, sir," says he, "for the clouds hanging over your mind, respecting your undertaking and situation: but hope God will give a happy increase to that good seed you have planted and watered, according to his will. The best of men in all ages, have failed in the success of their labor; and there will ever be found too many enemies to the cross of Christ: for earth will not be heaven. This reminds us of that happy place, where we shall not see and be grieved for transgressors; and where, for our well meant labors, our judgment is with

* To incur a premunire, is to be liable to imprisonment and loss of goods.

the Lord, and our reward with our God. And you well know, sir, that under the saddest appearances, we may have some share in the consolations which God gave Elijah; and may trust in him, that there is some wickedness we repress or prevent; some goodness by our means, weak and unworthy as we are, beginning and increasing in the hearts of men, at present; perhaps like a grain of mustard-seed, that in God's time may put forth, and spread, and flourish: and that, if the world seems not the better for us, it might be worse without us. Our low opinion of ourselves is a preparative to these successes; and so the modest and great Apostle found it.

"No doubt, sir, you have temptations where you are, nor is there any retreat from them; they hint to us the care we must take, and the promises we must apply to: and blessed is the man that endureth temptation.

"I rejoice in the good character you give, which I believe you well bestow, of Mr. Whitefield, who is coming to you—but I question not, but his labors will be better joined with, than supersede yours: and even his, and all our sufficiency and efficiency is of God.

"It is the least we can do to pray for one another; and if God will hear me, a great sinner, it will strengthen your interest in him. I recommend myself to a share in your prayers, for his pardon, acceptance, and assistance; and beg that my family—may not be forgotten by you."

Mr. Wesley, in the midst of this storm kept up by the arts of his avowed enemies, without a shilling in his pocket, and three thousand miles from home, possessed his soul in peace, and pursued his labors with the same unremitting diligence, as if he had enjoyed the greatest tranquillity and ease. October 30. He gives us an account of his labors on the Lord's-day. "The English service lasted from five till half an hour past six. The Italian (with a few Vaudois) began at nine. The second service for the English, including the sermon and the holy communion, continued from half an hour past ten, till about half an hour past twelve. The French service began at one. At two I catechised the children. About three began the English service. After this was ended, I joined with as many as my large room would hold, in reading, prayer, and singing. And about six the service of the Germans began; at which I was glad to be present, not as a teacher, but as a learner."

November 1. He received a temporary relief from his pressing wants. "Col. Stephens," says he, "arrived, by whom I received a benefaction of ten pounds sterling;* after having been for several months without one shilling in the house, but not without peace, health and contentment."

November 3. He attended the court holden on that day; and again

* I suppose the ten pounds mentioned in Dr. Burton's letter, the 15th of June.

at the court held on the twenty-third; urging an immediate hearing of his case, that he might have an opportunity of answering the allegations alleged against him. But this the magistrates refused, and at the same time countenanced every report to his disadvantage: whether it was a mere invention, or founded on a malicious construction of any thing he did or said. Mr. Wesley perceiving that he had not the most distant prospect of obtaining justice, that he was in a place where those in power were combined together to oppress him, and could any day procure evidence (as experience had shown) of words he had never spoken, and of actions he had never done; being disappointed too, in the primary object of his mission, preaching to the Indians; he consulted his friends what he ought to do; who were of opinion with him, that, by these circumstances, Providence did now call him to leave Savannah. The next day he called on Mr. Causton, and told him he designed to set out for England immediately. November 24, he put up the following advertisment in the great square, and quietly prepared for his journey.

"Whereas John Wesley designs shortly to set out for England, This is to desire those who have borrowed any books of him, to return them as soon as they conveniently can, to

JOHN WESLEY."

November 30. He went once more to Mr. Causton, to desire money to defray his expenses to England, intending to set out on Friday the second of December. It appears to me, that this was an event which the magistrates most ardently wished to take place, and to which all their proceedings had been solely directed. It is no objection to this opinion, that they published an order to prohibit him from leaving the province. It is manifest, that they had no intention of bringing the matter to a fair hearing before them, and of giving it a legal decision. They knew well that the evidence was so strong in Mr. Wesley's favor that they could not even invent a plausible pretence for giving the cause against him. But to give it in his favor would have been cause of rejoicing to him and his friends, and would have covered his enemies with shame; and they had no way of preventing this, but by delaying the trial as long as possible. On the other hand, they easily foresaw, that if by cutting off all prospect of terminating the affair, and multiplying false and injurious reports concerning him, every day, they could weary out his patience, and induce him to quit the province of his own accord, the triumph would be left to his enemies; and he leaving the province pending a prosecution against him, and in opposition to a prohibition of the magistrates, would bring a censure upon him, and make his conduct and character suspected among all those who did not know the circumstances of the case. Finding him now determined to go for England, they had a fine opportunity of giving their plan its full effect. Mr. Wesley

intended to set out about noon, the tide then serving: but about ten o'clock the magistrates sent for him, and told him he should not go out of the province, till he had entered into recognizance to appear at the court, and answer the allegations laid against him. Mr. Wesley replied, that he had appeared at six courts successively, and had openly desired a trial, but was refused it. They said that he must however give security to appear again. He asked, what security? After a long consultation together, they agreed upon a kind of bond, that he should appear at Savannah, when required, under a penalty of fifty pounds. But the Recorder added, you must likewise give bail to answer Mr. Williamson's action of one thousand pounds damages. "I then began," says Mr. Wesley, "to see into their design, of spinning out time and doing nothing; and so told him plainly, Sir, I will sign neither one bond nor the other: you know your business, and I know mine."

The magistrates finding him quite resolved to go for England, saw their plan was secure, and that they might carry on the farce, to keep up appearances in their own favor, without danger of disappointment. In the afternoon therefore, they published an order, requiring all officers to prevent his going out of the province; and forbidding any person to assist him so to do. The day was now far spent: after evening prayers, therefore, the tide again serving, Mr. Wesley left Savannah, in company with three other persons, no one attempting to hinder him. Indeed I have no doubt, but the magistrates were heartily glad to get rid of a man, whose whole manner of life was a constant reproof of their licentiousness, and whose words were as arrows sticking fast in them.

If we candidly review all the circumstances of this affair, we shall perhaps be led to conclude, that Mr. Wesley might have acted with more caution, and more regard to his own ease and character than he did, when he first saw the storm gathering and likely to burst with violence upon him. But his constant rule was, to ascertain to the satisfaction of his own mind, that particular line of conduct which duty required him to pursue as a Christian and a minister of the gospel, and then steadily to walk in it regardless of consequences. And there is every evidence which the case will admit, that he acted in this conscientious manner towards Mrs. Williamson. It does not appear that any one ever charged him with repelling her from the holy communion out of revenge because she would not marry him, except her relations, who now thought it necessary to injure his reputation as much as possible, to cover themselves from reproach. But this charge not only wants positive proof, it is even destitute of probability. It was about five months after her marriage when this circumstance happened, during the former part of which time he had frequently administered the sacrament to her, without showing any symptoms of revenge: and about three months after her marriage,

he saw such things in her conduct, as, in his private Journal which was never printed, induced him to bless God for his deliverance in not marrying her. Now let me ask any candid man, if it is probable, that Mr. Wesley could be actuated by a spirit of revenge for a disappointment at the end of five months, which had no influence on his conduct at the end of three months; and even after he had been convinced that the disappointment itself was a mercy, for which he secretly thanked God? I think no man will say it is probable, I apprehend it is impossible, this should be the case. In his pastoral character, Mr. Wesley acted by one rule towards all the communicants. If any one had discontinued his attendance at the Lord's table, he required him to signify his name some time the day before he intended to communicate again: and if any one had done wrong to his neighbor, so that the congregation was thereby offended, he required him openly to declare that he had repented. This rule the order of the Church of England required him to observe, and he acted by it invariably in all cases, whether the persons were rich or poor, friends or enemies. Mrs. Williamson did not conform to this established order, which must have been well known to all the communicants in so small a place. Mr. Wesley was therefore reduced to this alternative, either to break an order he held sacred, in her favor, and thereby incur the censure of a blameable partiality for her, after being married to another; or to repel her from the Holy Communion, and incur the censure of having done it out of revenge, because she would not marry him. Censure was inevitable, whichever way he had acted: and having well considered the matter, he determined to follow the rule he had always observed, and to leave the consequences to God.

Mr. Wesley enjoyed a wonderful state of health while in America. His constitution seemed to improve under the hardships he endured, which appeared sufficient to have weakened or destroyed the strongest man. Three hundred acres having been set apart at Savannah, for glebe land, he took from it what he thought sufficient for a good garden, and here he frequently worked with his hands. He continued his custom of eating little, of sleeping less, and of leaving not a moment of his time unemployed. He exposed himself with the utmost indifference to every change of season, and to all kinds of weather. Snow and hail, storm and tempest, had no effect on his iron body. He frequently slept on the ground in the summer, under the heavy dews of the night: and in the winter with his hair and clothes frozen to the earth in the morning. He would wade through swamps, and swim over rivers in his clothes, and then travel on till they were dry, without any apparent injury to his health. On one of these occasions he concludes, that any person might undergo the same hardship without injury, if his constitution was not impaired by the softness of a genteel education. In all Mr. Wesley's writings, I do not know such a flagrant instance of false reasoning as this: con-

trary to all the rules of logic, he draws a general conclusion from particular premises; but who is at all times in full possession of the powers of his own mind?

Mr. Wesley, and his three companions suffered great hardships in travelling from Purrysburg, to Port Royal. Not being able to procure a guide, they set out an hour before sunrise, without one. The consequence was, they lost their way; wandered in the woods till evening, without any food but part of a ginger-bread cake divided among them, and without a drop of water. At night, two of the company dug with their hands about three feet deep, and found water, with which they were refreshed. They lay down together on the ground (in December,) "And I, at least," says Mr. Wesley, "slept till near six in the morning." They rose, took the rest of the ginger-bread cake, and wandered on till between one and two o'clock, before they came to any house, or obtained any further refreshment. December 6, after many difficulties and delays, they came to Port-Royal, and the next day walked to Beaufort, on the opposite side of the island. Here Mr. Jones, the minister of the place, invited Mr. Wesley to his house, and gave him, as he acknowledges, a lively idea of the old English hospitality. Mr. Wesley adds in his private Journal, "Yet observing the elegance, and more than neatness of every thing about him, I could not but sigh to myself, and say, *Heu delicatum discipulum Duri Magistri.*" Perhaps this remark was uncharitable and unjust; and to adopt the language Mr. Wesley sometimes used, he was severely reproved for it shortly after. On the 9th, Mr. Delamotte having come to him, they took boat for Charlestown: but the wind being contrary, and provisions falling short, they were obliged on the 11th, to land at a plantation to get some refreshment. The people were unwilling to let them have any: at length, however, they gave them some bad potatoes, "of which," says Mr. Wesley, "they plainly told us we robbed the swine." The wind continued contrary, and they in want of every thing, till about noon, on the 12th, having reached John's Island, they desired a Mr. G. to let them have a little meat or drink of any sort, either with or without price. With much difficulty, he tells us, they obtained some potatoes, and liberty to roast them, in a fire his negroes had made at a distance from the house."

Mr. Wesley proceeds. "Early on Tuesday, December 13, we came to Charlestown, where I expected trials of a quite different nature, and more dangerous; contempt and hunger being easy to be borne; but who can bear respect and fulness of bread?" On the 16th, he parted from his faithful friend, Mr. Delamotte, from whom he had been but a few days separate since their departure from England. On the 22d he took his leave of America, after having preached the gospel, as he observes in Savannah, not as he ought, but as he was able, for one year and near nine months.

In the beginning of the following May, Mr. Whitefield arrived at Savannah, where he found some serious persons, the fruits of Mr. Wesley's ministry, glad to receive him. He had now an opportunity of inquiring upon the spot, into the circumstances of the late disputes, and bears testimony to the ill usage Mr. Wesley had received; but adds, he thought it most prudent not to repeat grievances.* When he was at Charlestown, Mr. Garden acquainted him with the ill-treatment Mr. Wesley had met with, and assured him that were the same arbitrary proceedings to commence against him, he would defend him with life and fortune.† These testimonies, of persons so respectable, and capable of knowing all the circumstances of the affair, coincide with the general tendency of the statement above given; and with candid persons must do away all suspicions with regard to the integrity of Mr. Wesley's conduct.

During his voyage to England, Mr. Wesley entered into a close and severe examination of himself, and recorded the result with the greatest openness. January 8, 1738, in the fulness of his heart he writes thus: "By the most infallible of proofs, inward feeling, I am convinced, 1. Of unbelief; having no such faith in Christ, as will prevent my heart from being troubled.—2. Of pride, throughout my life past: inasmuch as I thought I had, what I find I have not. 3. Of gross irrecollection; inasmuch as, in a storm I cry to God every moment; in a calm, not. 4. Of levity and luxuriancy of spirit—appearing by my speaking words not tending to edify; but most, by my manner of speaking of my enemies——Lord save, or I perish! Save me, 1. By such a faith as implies peace in life and death. 2. But such humility, as may fill my heart from this hour forever, with a piercing uninterrupted sense, *Nihil est quod hactenus feci*, that, hitherto I have done nothing. 3. By such a recollection as may enable me to cry to thee every moment. 4. By steadiness, seriousness, σεμνοτητι, sobriety of spirit, avoiding as fire, every word that tendeth not to edifying, and never speaking of any who oppose me, or sin against God, without all my own sins set in array before my face."

January 13. They had a thorough storm.—On the 24th, being about 160 leagues from the land's end, he observes, his mind was full of thought, and he wrote as follows: "I went to America to convert the Indians; but oh! who shall convert me? Who is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief; I have a fair summer religion; I can talk well, nay, and believe myself while no danger is near; but let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled Nor can I say, to die is gain!

'I have a sin of fear, that when I've spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore!'

"I think verily if the gospel be true, I am safe—I *now* believe the

* Robert's Narrative of the Life of Mr. George Whitefield, page 56. † Ibid. page 58.

gospel is true. I show my faith by my works, by staking my all upon it. I would do so again and again a thousand times, if the choice were still to make. Whoever sees me, sees I would be a Christian. Therefore are my ways not like other men's ways. Therefore I have been, I am, I am content to be, a by-word, a proverb of reproach. But in a storm I think, what if the gospel be not true; then thou art of all men most foolish—O who will deliver me from this fear of death? What shall I do? Where shall I fly from it?" &c. These reflections on his own state, evince the deepest consciousness that he had not attained the privileges of a true believer in Christ: though he diligently sought them in the practice of every moral and religious duty, according to the best of his knowledge. This would naturally suggest some defect in the principle on which he performed these duties. The next day, therefore, Jan. 25, he took a review of his religious principles on a few important points; and in a private paper wrote as follows:

1. "For many years I have been tossed about by various winds of doctrine. I asked long ago, 'What must I do to be saved?' The Scripture answered, keep the commandments, believe, hope, love; follow after these tempers till thou hast fully attained, that is, till death: by all those outward works and means which God hath appointed, by walking as Christ walked.

2. "I was early warned against laying, as the Papists do, too much stress on outward works, or on a faith with works; which, as it does not include, so it will never lead to true hope or charity. Nor am I sensible, that to this hour I have laid too much stress on either; having from the very beginning valued both faith and the means of grace, and good works, not on their own account, but as believing God, who had appointed them, would by them bring me in due time to the mind that was in Christ.

3. "But before God's time was come, I fell among some Lutheran and Calvinist authors, whose confused and indigested accounts, magnified faith to such an amazing size, that it quite hid all the rest of the commandments. I did not then see, that this was the natural effect of their overgrown fear of Popery: being so terrified with the cry of merit and good works, that they plunged at once into the other extreme. In this labyrinth I was utterly lost; not being able to find out what the error was; nor yet to reconcile this uncouth hypothesis, either with Scripture or common sense.

4. "The English writers, such as Bishop Beveridge, Bishop Taylor, and Mr. Nelson, a little relieved me from these well-meaning, wrong-headed Germans. Their accounts of Christianity, I could easily see to be, in the main consistent both with reason and Scripture. Only when they interpreted Scripture in different ways, I was often much at a loss. And again, there was one thing much insisted on in Scrip-

ture, the unity of the church, which none of them, I thought, clearly explained, or strongly inculcated.

5. "But it was not long before Providence brought me to those, who showed me a sure rule of interpreting Scripture; viz. *Consensus Veterum: 'Quod ab omnibus, quod ubique, quod semper creditum.'* At the same time they sufficiently insisted upon a due regard to the one church, at all times, and in all places. Nor was it long before I bent the bow too far the other way: 1. By making Antiquity a co-ordinate, rather than sub-ordinate, rule with Scripture. 2. By admitting several doubtful writings, as undoubted evidences of Antiquity. 3. By extending Antiquity too far, even to the middle or end of the fourth century. 4. By believing more practices to have been universal in the ancient church, than ever were so. 5. By not considering that the decrees of one provincial synod, could bind only that province; and that the decrees of a general synod, only those provinces whose representatives met therein. 6. By not considering, that the most of those decrees were adapted to particular times and occasions; and consequently when those occasions ceased, must cease to bind even those provinces.

6. "These considerations insensibly stole upon me, as I grew acquainted with the mystic writers: whose noble descriptions of union with God, and internal religion, made every thing else appear mean, flat and insipid. But in truth they made good works appear so too; yea, and faith itself, and what not? These gave me an entire new view of religion; nothing like any I had before. But alas! it was nothing like that religion which Christ and his apostles lived and taught. I had a plenary dispensation from all the commands of God: the form ran thus, 'Love is all; all the commands beside, are only means of love: you must choose those which you feel are means to you, and use them as long as they are so.' Thus were all the bands burst at once. And though I could never fully come into this, nor contentedly omit what God enjoined; yet, I know not how, I fluctuated between obedience and disobedience. I had no heart, no vigor, no zeal in obeying; continually doubting whether I was right or wrong, and never out of perplexities and entanglements. Nor can I at this hour give a distinct account, how, or when, I came a little back toward the right way: only my present sense is this—all the other enemies of Christianity are triflers: the mystics are the most dangerous of its enemies. They stab it in the vitals; and its most serious professors are most likely to fall by them. May I praise Him who hath snatched me out of this fire likewise, by warning all others, that it is set on fire of hell."

The censure Mr. Wesley has here passed on the *Lutheran*, the *Calvinist*, and *mystic* writers, is abundantly too severe. I apprehend, Mr. Wesley did not at this time, undersand either the *Lutheran*, or *Calvinist* writers on the article of faith. He acknowledges after his

return to England, that he did not at first understand the Moravian doctrine of faith, which, I believe, differed but little from that held in the Lutheran Church.—What the moderate *mystics* have said on the union of the soul with God, is in general excellent, and better said by them, than by most other writers. It must indeed be owned, that they do not sufficiently insist on the atonement and mediation of Christ, as the only foundation of a sinner's union with God: nor do they always explain and enforce the scriptural method of attaining it.

January 29. They once more saw English land: and Feb. 1, Mr. Wesley landed at Deal; where he was informed Mr. Whitefield had sailed the day before, for Georgia. He read prayers, and explained a portion of Scripture to a large company at the inn; and on the third arrived safe in London.

CHAPTER IV.

GIVING SOME ACCOUNT OF MR. WESLEY, FROM FEBRUARY, 1738, TILL APRIL, 1739, WHEN HE BECAME AN ITINERANT AND FIELD-PREACHER.

On his arrival in England, he made some reflections on his own state of mind, and on the effects of his visit to America. "It is now," says he, "two years and almost four months, since I left my native country, in order to teach the Georgian Indians, the nature of Christianity: but what have I learned myself in the mean time? Why, what I the least of all suspected, that I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God. *I am not mad*, though I thus speak; but I speak the words of truth and soberness; if haply some of those who still *dream*, may *awake* and see, that as I am, so are they, &c."—He observes however, "Many reasons I have to bless God—for my having been carried into that strange land, contrary to all my preceding resolutions. Hereby I trust he hath in some measure *humbled me and proved me, and shown me what was in my heart.* Hereby I have been taught to *beware of men.*—Hereby God has given me to know many of his servants, particularly those of the church of Hernhuth. Hereby my passage is open to the writings of holy men, in the German, Spanish, and Italian tongues. All in Georgia have heard the word of God: some have believed and began to run well. A few steps have been taken towards publishing the glad-tidings both to the African and American heathens. Many children have learned *how they ought to serve God*, and to be useful to their neighbor. And those whom it most concerns, have an opportunity of knowing the state of their infant colony, and laying a firmer foundation of peace and happiness to many generations."

Mr. Wesley here supposes, that he was not converted to God, because he had not that faith which delivered him from the fear of death, and gave him victory over all sin, inward or outward. He does not seem to have any immediate reference to that notion of faith which he afterwards espoused and taught; for as yet he did not understand it. When the first Journal, in which this is said, was printed in his Works, in 1774, he doubted whether the severe sentence he here pronounced upon himself, was just. This ought not to be charged on Mr. Wesley, as a contradiction, but as a change in his opinion. This is certainly commendable, when an increase of knowledge gives a man sufficient reason for so doing. In 1774, he believed, that when he went to America, he had the faith of a servant, though not of a son.* Though he was far from being singular in making this distinction, yet the propriety of it has been doubted, or rather denied. It is of some importance in christian experience that the subject should be understood, and therefore it deserves to be examined.

The distinction is founded on what the Apostle has said, Rom. viii. 15, and further illustrated and confirmed, Gal. iv. 1—7. Mr. Wesley observes in a note on Rom. viii. 15, that, "*The Spirit of bondage*, here seems directly to mean, those operations of the Holy Spirit, by which the soul on its first conviction, feels itself in bondage to sin, to the world, to satan, and obnoxious to the wrath of God." He has printed a sermon on the same text, in which he explains it in the same way. He was not singular in this interpretation, as might easily be shown from respectable authority. But, though it be most true, that a person under conviction for sin, is in a state of bondage and fear, it does not follow that this is the *direct* meaning of the Apostle, or that the distinction between a servant and a son of God, ought to be immediately fixed on this foundation. Many among the most learned and pious persons in the christian church, have understood the spirit of bondage to fear, as referring to that servile spirit, or spirit of servitude, which the whole Mosaic economy tended to produce.† And this seems most agreeable to the tenor of the Apostle's discourse, and most conformable to his grand design of establishing and illustrating the truth and excellency of the gospel, as a more perfect dispensation of mercy and favor from God.

We must not however suppose, that, because the faithful under the Old Testament, had a spirit of bondage to fear, they were not therefore children of God; or that they had not the spirit of God. In every age of the world, since the first promise of a Redeemer, those who have placed their confidence in the mercy of God, manifested through a promised Saviour, have become children of God, heirs of the heavenly inheritance, and experienced some degree of divine grace. But under the Mosaic dispensation, the faithful themselves, were

* See the Errata to the 26th volume of his Works.

† See Doddridge; and Pole's Synopsis.

children held in a state of servitude, which produced fear, rather than filial confidence, or the spirit of adoption, crying Abba, Father. The reason of this was, the nature of that economy under which they lived, which was wonderfully adapted to the state of the Israelites in that age of the world, and only preparatory to the introduction of a more perfect dispensation of the Divine favor.

The Mosaic economy, taking it in a loose and general sense, may be considered in three points of view, corresponding to the ends it was intended to answer. The first view of it, regards those laws it contained, which related *only* to external things, and were merely literal or carnal, as the Apostle calls them.* The intention of these was, to separate the whole body of the people from idolatry, and all mixture with other nations: to preserve the worship of the true God in the world: to make the Israelites the depositaries of the promises, prophecies, and the whole word of God: and to keep their own tribes and families distinct: that as the Messiah was to descend, according to the flesh, from the seed of Abraham, the tribe of Judah, and the family of David, his introduction into the world might be more strongly marked, the prophecies concerning him be distinctly fulfilled, and his character be clearly ascertained. These laws required no more than a mere external obedience, the reward of which was, the land of Canaan, with protection, prosperity, and long life.

The second view of it, is typical. The promise made to Abraham, being continued through this economy, the laws and institutions established for the purposes above mentioned, were so ordered as to become typical representations of Christ and the benefits of his kingdom. They gave a new modification to the promulgation of the promise of a Redeemer, the object of faith and hope in true believers, by which they obtained a foretaste of the grace and blessings of the gospel. All these laws and institutions were peculiar to Moses, purely external and temporary; being preparatory to the coming of Christ, when they were to be abolished.

The third view of this economy, regards those moral precepts introduced into it, to regulate the moral principles, as well as conduct of the people towards each other, for the well-being of the state: and also such other commands as tended to give them a higher and more spiritual notion of their duty to God, and of the nature of sin, than the Mosaic code suggested. These were intended to raise the minds of the people to something higher than the mere external economy of Moses: to awaken in them a sense of their depravity; to show them the spiritual nature of sin; its power, dominion, and guilt; that conscious of their wants, they might more ardently desire their great Deliverer, and be better prepared to receive him. These precepts and commands, being of a general and permanent nature, were not pecu-

* Heb. vii. 16; ix. 10.

liar to Moses, nor to be done away with his institution; but additions to his economy, that were highly necessary and useful.

That the promise before made, was continued through this dispensation, is manifest. For as circumcision was not of Moses, but of the fathers, so the promise of grace and life by Christ, was not given by him, but found by him already existing. It is not said, That the promise was added to the law; but, That the law was added to the promise.* The law of Moses, therefore, did not disannul, or do away the promise of salvation by a Redeemer, or any way alter the method of a sinner's justification before God, and acceptance to eternal life, as exemplified in the case of Abraham: nor yet change, or lessen the obligation to those duties men owe to God, and to one another, founded on the permanent relations of things. It follows, that these, and the law of Moses, though different in their nature, and designed for very different purposes, were associated together in this economy, until, "In the fulness of time," God should send forth his Son.

But though the promise still existed under the law, which was intended to bring men ultimately to Christ; yet the Mosaic economy exhibited the Messiah, and the nature and benefits of his kingdom, through a kind of veil. These appeared in it, like objects placed in the back-ground of a picture, distant, obscure, and diminished from their natural size. This representation best suited that age of the world, the state and circumstances of the Israelites, and the future designs of Providence. The prophets, indeed, as the fulness of time when Christ should appear, drew nearer and nearer, often brought forward these important objects into a stronger light, and gave them a more bold and full appearance, directing the minds of the people to look through their external and temporary economy, to blessings more general, permanent, and satisfactory.

Under this economy, God assumed the character, and had the title of King of Israel, jealous of his prerogatives and glory. The people were prone to idolatry, which was rebellion against their King; and all the laws tended to produce a "spirit of bondage to fear," for their subjugation, that the external purposes of this dispensation might be obtained. So terrible was the appearance of the Divine majesty at the giving of the law, that the people said, "Let not God speak to us, lest we die." † And Moses himself said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." ‡ The punishments under this government were exceedingly severe; so that an error through inadvertency was sometimes punished with immediate death, which made the most pious among them afraid.§ The body of the ceremonial law, was minute, expensive, and laborious, and required the most *servile* obedience. Peter calls t a yoke, which neither they nor their fathers could bear: ‖ and

* Gal. iii. 19.
† Exod. xx. 19.
‡ Heb. xii. 21.
§ 2 Sam. vi. 7, 9.
‖ Acts xv. 10.

Paul, a yoke of bondage.* The yearly sacrifices brought their sins to their remembrance, the repetition showing they were not expiated.† The people were kept at a distance from God in their worship; even from the symbol of his presence in the holiest of all, to which the high priest alone was admitted, and that but once a year.‡ And even at the burning of incense morning and evening, the people stood praying without.§ In their approaches to God in prayer, they addressed him as a Sovereign, under the title of God, or Lord; Jesus Christ being the first who taught us to say, "Our Father who art in heaven;" himself procuring for us this παῤῥησία, or *freedom* and *openness* of access to the presence of God. It was given in charge to Moses, that he should not let the priests, and the people, βιαζεσθωσαν,‖ *break through* the described limits in their approaches to God, nor invade a place deemed too holy for them to enter. This was never allowed under the *ceremonial* law. How different is our liberty! "From the days of John the Baptist," says our Lord,¶ "the kingdom of heaven, βιαζεται, suffereth violence," or rather, is invaded by violence; that is, in *violation* of the commands and prohibitions of the *ceremonial* law: and the fences being broken down, which had shut out the Gentiles from it; and the formalities done away, which kept the Jews at a certain distance in bondage and fear, the βιαςαι, *invaders*, regardless of the solemnities and restrictions prescribed by the law, ἁρπαζεσιν αυτην, seize upon it with eagerness and confidence, having boldness to enter into the holiest by a new and living way.**—The very word which the Seventy had used with a negative particle expressing prohibition, our Lord uses in the affirmative, thereby showing the prohibition was taken off.—Indeed, the whole of the old economy was full of prohibitions, severities, and hardships; to which the most faithful and pious were subject, as well as the most wicked and profligate. It tended to produce bondage and fear, particularly the fear of death, to which the Jews were then, and are even now, remarkably subject. The apostle compares those under it, to persons shut up in a strong place of custody,†† like criminals who had not obtained the full privileges of a free pardon. Afterwards, comparing the condition of the faithful under the law of Moses, with the privileges of believers under the gospel, he finely illustrates what is said, Rom. viii. 15, and fully establishes the distinction between a servant and a son—"Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father: even so, when we were children"—that is, under the Mosaic economy—"we were in bondage under the elements of the world"—to which the ceremonial law may fitly be

* Gal. v. 1.
† Heb. x. 3, 18.
‡ Levit. xvi. 2. Heb. ix. 7.
§ Luke i. 10.
‖ The Septuagint, Exod. xix. 24.
¶ Matt. xi. 12.
** Heb. x. 19, 20.
†† Gal. iii. 23.

compared.—"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son—to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son."*—It appears then from what has been said, that the distinction Mr. Wesley made, is scriptural and just, so far as it relates to the different state of believers under the Old and New Testament. It must be observed however, that there is a low degree of christian experience, in which a person is in a state similar to the condition of believers under the Mosaic dispensation, subject to bondage and fear, particularly the fear of death; and in the latter part of life, he judged this to have been his own state when he went to America, and returned from it. The very learned Buddeus, has observed, that most professing Christians seem content to live in this state, without ever rising into the enjoyment of that full liberty wherewith Christ has made them free.†

After Mr. Wesley arrived in London, he waited on the trustees for Georgia, at several different times, and gave them an account of the colony; but his account was so different from what others had flattered them with, that he supposes they did not soon forgive him. Time however convinced them of Mr. Wesley's fidelity, when complaints pouring in upon them from all sides, they thought it best to resign their charter into the hands of the king.

February 7, "A day much to be remembered," says Mr. Wesley, he met Peter Bohler, and two other persons, teachers in the Moravian church. Hitherto he had reduced his religious principles to practice, in the most scrupulous and rigorous manner, and yet had not attained that victory over the evils of his own heart, and that peace and happiness which he saw the gospel promised. It seems as if he had always supposed, that bodily austerities, and a religious regard to the duties he owed to God and man, would produce in him the christian faith, and the true christian temper. After about ten years of painful labor, his experience convinced him, that his notions were not evangelical, that he had considered as causes, things that were only placed as the fruits of faith in the gospel economy; and therefore, that he neither possessed saving faith, nor had a right notion of it. Having observed, both at sea, and in America, that the Mora-

* Gal. iv. 1—7.

† In the above quotation from the Seventy, we may observe, that they translate the Hebrew word הרס by the Greek word βιαζω, Exod. xix. 24. The Hebrew verb occurs, in one form or other, about thirty-two times in the Old Testament. It generally signifies to break, throw down, or destroy; and often in opposition to building up: but no where exactly in the connexion it is here used, in reference to the *limits prescribed to the people in their approaches to God;* and it is remarkable that the Seventy have no where rendered it by the Greek verb βιαζω, but in this one place. Our Lord, by using the very same word without the negative particle, seems to intimate that a freedom of access to God, not allowed under the law, is allowed under the gospel, the prohibition being taken off. Walchius, has hinted at this interpretation of our Lord's words, Matt. xi. 12. See Miscel. Sacra, p. 768.

vian brethren enjoyed a state of peace and comfort in their minds, to which he was almost wholly a stranger, he was well prepared to hear what these messengers of God had to say of faith as the means of obtaining it. He was determined that his conviction should be the result of knowledge; and therefore made continual objections to what Bohler said on the subject. This occasioned Bohler to say more than once, '*Mi frater, Mi frater, excoquenda est ista tua philosophia:*' My brother, my brother, that philosophy of yours must be purged away. We may observe however, that objections in such cases, are seldom the result of just reasoning, but the mere effects of prejudice, which a previous system had produced in his mind.

Feb. 27. He took coach for Salisbury, to see his mother; intending also to visit his brother Samuel, at Tiverton. But March 2, he received a message that his brother Charles was dying at Oxford, and immediately set out for that place. He now renewed and set down his former resolutions respecting his own behavior. 1. To use absolute openness and unreserve, with all he should converse with. 2. To labor after continual seriousness, not willingly indulging himself in any the least levity of behavior, or in laughter, no, not for a moment. 3. To speak no word which did not tend to the glory of God; in particular, not to talk of worldly things. "Others may, nay must," said he; "but what is that to me." 4. To take no pleasure which did not tend to the glory of God, thanking God every moment for what he did take, and therefore rejecting every sort and degree of it, which he felt he could not so thank him in and for it.

At Oxford, Mr. Wesley again met with Peter Bohler; "by whom," says he, "in the hand of the great God, I was on Sunday the 5th, clearly convinced of unbelief, of the want of that faith whereby alone we are saved,"—he afterwards added—"with the full christian salvation." He was now fully convinced, that his faith had hitherto been faith in God, too much separated from an evangelical view of the promises of a free justification, or pardon of sin, through the atonement and mediation of Christ alone; which was the reason why he had been held in continual bondage and fear. It immediately occurred to his mind, "Leave off preaching; how can you preach to others, who have not faith yourself?" He consulted his friend Bohler, who said, "By no means. Preach faith *till* you have it, and then *because* you have it, you *will* preach faith."

On the 15th of this month he set out for Manchester, accompanied by Mr. Kinchin of Corpus-Christi College, and a Mr. Fox. In this journey, they lost few opportunities of speaking on matters of religion to those they met with, either on the road, or at the inns. The practice was new, and the success various; some staring with silent astonishment, and others appeared thankful and ready to receive instruction. On the 22d they returned to Oxford, and next day Mr. Wesley observes, "I met Peter Bohler again, who now amazed me

more and more, by the account he gave of the fruits of living faith, the holiness and happiness which he affirmed to attend it. The next morning I began the Greek Testament again, resolving to abide by *the law and the testimony*, being confident, that God would hereby show me whether *this doctrine* was of God."

About this time he began to pray extempore. March 27, Mr. Kinchin went with him to the castle, where, after reading prayers, and preaching on, "It is appointed for men once to die," "We prayed," says he, "with the condemned man, first in several forms of prayer, and then in such words as were given us in that hour. He kneeled down in much heaviness and confusion, having 'no rest in his bones by reason of his sins.' After a space he rose up, and eagerly said, 'I am now ready to die. I know Christ has taken away my sins, and there is no more condemnation for me.' The same composed cheerfulness he showed when he was carried to execution; and in his last moments was the same, enjoying a perfect peace in confidence that he was accepted in the beloved." Mr. Wesley again observes, "that on Saturday, April 1, being at Mr. Foxe's society, he found his heart so full, that he could not confine himself to the forms of prayer they were accustomed to use there. Neither," says he, "do I propose to be confined to them any more; but to pray indifferently, with a form or without, as I may find suitable to particular occasions."

A few observations have already been made on the propriety and usefulness of extemporary prayer;* and here I shall transcribe the words Dr. Watts† has quoted from the Marquis of Halifax, who being a courtier in the reigns of the two brothers, king Charles and James II. cannot be supposed to have any partiality for deviation from the forms of the established church. This noble writer, it seems, in a little book under a borrowed character, has expressed his own sentiments on this subject. "He tells us," says Dr. Watts, "he is far from relishing the impertinent wanderings of those who pour out long prayers upon the congregation, and all from their own stock, too often a barren soil, which produces weeds instead of flowers, and by this means they expose religion itself rather than promote men's devotion: on the other side, there may be too great a restraint put upon men whom God and nature have distinguished from their fellow laborers, by blessing them with a happier talent, and by giving them not only good sense, but a powerful utterance too; this has enabled them to gush out upon the attentive auditory with a mighty stream of devout and unaffected eloquence. When a man so qualified, endued with learning too, and above all adorned with a good life, breaks out into a warm and well delivered prayer before his sermon, it has the appearance of a divine rapture: he raises and leads the hearts of the assembly in another manner than the most composed or best studied

* Vol. I. page 108.

† See his Humble Attempt toward the Revival of Practical Religion, p. 161.

form of set words can ever do; and the *Pray we's*, who serve up all their sermons with the same garnishing, would look like so many statues, or men of straw in the pulpit, compared with those who speak with such a powerful zeal, that men are tempted at the moment to believe that heaven itself has dictated their words to them."—We may observe that no man will pray with the energy and force here described, unless his own heart be animated and powerfully quickened, with the most lively sentiments of true devotion: and if this be the case, a man will attain to it by constant habits of prayer and reading the Scriptures, although he have but little learning, and his understanding not improved above mediocrity.

April 21. He met Peter Bohler, once more. "I had now," says he, "no objection to what he said of the nature of faith; that it is, to use the words of our church, a sure trust and confidence which a man has in God, that through the merit of Christ, his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favor of God. Neither could I deny, either the happiness or holiness which he described as fruits of this living faith. 'The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and he that believeth hath the witness in himself,' fully convinced me of the former: as, 'whatsoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; and whosoever believeth is born of God,' did of the latter. But I could not comprehend what he spoke of an *instantaneous work*. I could not understand how this faith should be given in a moment; how a man could *at once*, be thus turned from darkness to light; from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. I searched the Scriptures again touching this very thing, particularly the Acts of the Apostles. But to my utter astonishment, found scarce any instances there, of other than *instantaneous* conversions; scarce any so slow as that of St. Paul. I had but one retreat left, viz. Thus, I grant, God wrought in the *first* ages of Christianity: but the times are changed. What reason have I to believe, he works in the same manner now? But on Sunday 22, I was beat out of this retreat too, by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses; who testified God had so wrought in themselves; giving them in a moment, such a faith in the blood of his Son, as translated them out of darkness into light, and of sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, 'Lord, help thou my unbelief!'"

He now began to declare, 'the faith as it is in Jesus,' which those that were convinced of sin gladly received. A day or two following he was much confirmed in the truth by hearing the experience of Mr. Hutchins, of Pembroke College, and Mrs. Fox: "Two living witnesses," says he, "that God *can* at least, if he *does* not always, give that faith whereof cometh salvation, in a moment, as lightning falling from heaven."

May 1. They began to form themselves into a religious society,

which met in Fetter-Lane. This has been called the first Methodist society in London. Mr. Wesley distinguishes the origin of Methodism, into three distinct periods. "The first rise of Methodism," says he, "was in November, 1729, when four of us met together at Oxford: the second was at Savannah, in April, 1736, when twenty or thirty persons met at my house: the last was at London, on this day, when forty or fifty of us agreed to meet together every Wednesday evening, in order to free conversation, begun and ended with singing and prayer.* This is hardly accurate; as Mr. Wesley, his brother, and their friends, retained little but the exterior, of their former character. Having changed their doctrines, they were now Moravians, rather than the Methodists of Oxford, and Savannah. When some of the Moravian teachers, afterwards introduced innovations into their doctrines, Mr. Wesley and his friends separated from them, and formed a distinct society, as will soon appear; and this, I apprehend, was the true origin of the present economy of Methodism. In the society now formed, the old Methodists and the Moravians were indiscriminately blended together in one body. Their rules were printed under the title of, "Orders of a Religious Society, meeting in Fetter-Lane; in obedience to the command of God by St. James, and by the advice of Peter Bohler:" It was then agreed,

1. That they would meet together once in a week, to confess their faults one to another, and to pray one for another that they might be healed.

2. That others, of whose sincerity they were well assured, might, if they desired it, meet with them for that purpose. And May 29, it was agreed,

3. That the persons desirous of meeting together for that purpose, should be divided into several bands, or little companies, none of which should consist of fewer than five, or more than ten persons.

4. That some person in each band, should be desired to speak to the rest in order, who might be called the leader of that band. And on Monday, September 26, it was further agreed,

5. That each band should meet twice in a week; once on Monday evening and the second time when it was most convenient for each band; every meeting to be begun and ended with singing and prayer.

6. That every one in order, should speak as freely, plainly, and concisely as he could, the state of his heart, with his several temptations and deliverances since the last time of meeting.

7. That all the bands should have a conference at eight every Wednesday evening, begun and ended with singing and prayer.

8. That any who desired to be admitted into this society, should be asked, What are your reasons for desiring this? Will you be entirely open, using no kind of reserve? Have you any objection to any of our orders? (which may then be read.)

* See his Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv. page 175.

9. That when any new member was proposed, every one present should speak clearly and freely whatever objection he had against him.

10. That those against whom no reasonable objection appeared, should be, in order for their trial, formed into one or more distinct bands, and some person agreed on to assist them.

11. That after two months' trial, if no objection then appeared, they might be admitted into the society.

12. That every fourth Saturday should be observed as a day of general intercession, which might continue from twelve to two, from three to five, and from six to eight.

13. That on the Sunday seven-night following, there should be a general love-feast, from seven till ten in the evening.

14. That no particular person should be allowed to act in any thing, contrary to any order of this society; but that every one without distinction should submit to the determination of his brethren; and that if any person or persons did not, after being thrice admonished, conform to the society, they should no longer be esteemed as members.

15. That any person whom the whole society should approve might be accounted a corresponding member, and as such be admitted to the general meetings, provided he corresponded with the society, at least once a month.

The fourteenth rule, to which the ministers were subject as well as the common members, was an excellent preservative against the abuse of power; and some of the others are good guards against the admission of improper members. It would have been happy for the Methodist societies if these rules had been preserved among them, and rigorously kept: the work would in that case have been more pure than it has been, and much confusion would have been prevented.

Wherever Mr. Wesley was now invited to preach in the churches, he boldly offered to all, a free salvation through faith in the blood of Christ. At most of these, he was soon told, "Sir, you must preach here no more." To illustrate the reason of the offence which this doctrine gave, he has inserted in his own Journal, part of a letter written by Mr. Gambold to Mr. Charles Wesley, a little after this time. This letter abounds with fine thoughts on the subject, and contains some excellent advice. Mr. Wesley has inserted but a small part; I shall transcribe a little more of it.

"I have seen upon this occasion, more than ever I could have imagined, how intolerable the doctrine of faith is to the mind of man: how peculiarly intolerable to the most religious men. One may say the most unchristian things, even down to deism; the most enthusiastic things, so they proceed but upon mental raptures, lights and unions; the most severe things, even the whole rigor of ascetic mortification; and all this will be forgiven. But if you speak of faith, in such a manner as makes Christ a Saviour to the utmost, a most uni-

versal help and refuge; in such a manner as takes away glorying, but adds happiness to wretched man; as discovers a greater pollution in the best of us, than we could before acknowledge, but brings a greater deliverence from it, than we could before expect: if any one offers to talk at this rate, he shall be heard with the same abhorrence as if he was going to rob mankind of their salvation, their mediator, or their highest happiness. I am persuaded, that a *Montanist*, or a *Novation*, who from the height of his purity should look with contempt upon poor sinners, and exclude them from all mercy, would not be thought such an overthrower of the gospel, as he who should learn from the author of it to be a friend to publicans and sinners, and to sit down upon the level with them as soon as they begin to repent. But this is not to be wondered at. For all religious people have such a quantity of righteousness, acquired by much painful exercise, and formed at last into current habits, which is their wealth both for this world and the next. Now all other schemes of religion are either so complaisant as to tell them they are very rich, and have enough to triumph in; or else only a little rough, but friendly in the main, by telling them their riches are not sufficient, but by such arts of self-denial and mental refinement they may enlarge the stock. But the doctrine of faith is a downright robber; it takes away all this wealth, and only tells us, it is deposited for us with somebody else, upon whose bounty we must live like mere beggars. Indeed they who are truly beggars, vile and filthy sinners till very lately, may stoop to live in this dependent condition; it suits them well enough: but they who have long distinguished themselves from the herd of vicious wretches, or have even gone beyond moral men; for them to be told that they are either not so well; or but the same needy, impotent, insignificant vessels of mercy with others, this is more shocking to reason than transubstantiation. For reason had rather resign its pretensions to judge what is bread or flesh, than have this honor wrested from it, to be the architect of virtue and righteousness.—But where am I running? My design was only to give you warning, that wherever you go, this *foolishness* of preaching will alienate hearts from you, and open mouths against you. What are you then to do, my dear friend? I will not exhort you to courage; we need not talk of that, for nothing that is approaching is evil. I will only mention the prejudice we shall be under, if we seem in the least to lay aside universal charity, and modesty of expression. Though we love some persons more than we did, let us love none less: and the rather, because we cannot say any one is bad, or destitute of divine grace, for not thinking as we do. Indignation at mankind, is a temper unsuitable to this cause. If we are at peace with God in *Christ*, let it soften our demeanor still more, even towards gainsayers.—What has given most offence hitherto, is what perhaps may best be spared: as some people's confident and hasty triumphs in the grace of God; not by way of humble thank-

fulness to him for looking upon them, or acknowledgment of some peace and strength unknown before, which they hope will be increased to them; but insisting on the completeness of their deliverance already from all sin, and taking to them every *apostolical* boast in the strongest terms.—Let us speak of every thing in such manner as may convey glory to Christ, without letting it glance on ourselves by the way.—Let us profess, when we can with truth, how *really* the christian salvation is fulfilled in us, rather than how *sublimely*."—This is certainly most important advice, and ought to be daily considered and attended to in practice both by every minister, and by every private Christian, who has any experience of the grace and blessings of the gospel.

Mr. Wesley now hungered and thirsted more and more after righteousness, even the righteousness which is of God by faith. He saw the promise of justification and life was the free gift of God through Jesus Christ. The nearer he approached to the enjoyment of it, the more distinctly he perceived, and more strongly felt, his own sinfulness, guilt, and helplessness, which he thus expressed in a letter to a friend. "I feel what you say, though not enough, for I am under the same condemnation. I see that the whole law of God, is holy, just, and good. I know every thought, every temper of my soul, ought to bear God's image and superscription. But how am I fallen from the glory of God! I feel that I am sold under sin. I know, that I too deserve nothing but wrath, being full of all abominations, and having no good thing in me to atone for them, or to remove the wrath of God. All my works, my righteousness, my prayer, need an atonement for themselves. So that my mouth is stopped. I have nothing to plead. God is holy, I am unholy. God is a consuming fire. I am altogether a sinner, meet to be consumed.

"Yet I hear a voice (and is it not the voice of God) saying, 'Believe and thou shalt be saved. He that believeth, is passed from death unto life. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

"O let no one deceive us by vain words, as if we had already attained this faith! By its fruits we shall know it. Do we already feel peace with God, and joy in the Holy Ghost? Does his Spirit bear witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God? Alas! with mine he does not. Nor I fear with yours. O thou Saviour of men, save us from trusting in any thing but *Thee!* Draw us after Thee! Let us be emptied of ourselves, and then fill us with all peace and joy in believing, and let nothing separate us from thy love in time or eternity."

Mr. Wesley continued in this state, till Wednesday, May 24. "I think," says he, "it was about five this morning, that I opened my Testament on those words, 'There are given unto us, exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the

divine nature.' 2 Pet. i. 4. Just as I went out, I opened it again on those words, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.' In the afternoon I was asked to go to St. Paul's. The anthem was, 'Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complant. If thou Lord, will be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? But there is mercy with thee; therefore thou shalt be feared. O Israel, trust in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins.

"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate-street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation: and an assurance was given me, that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.

"I began to pray with all my might, for those who had in a more especial manner despitefully used me, and persecuted me. I then testified openly to all there, what I now first felt in my heart. But it was not long before the enemy suggested, 'This cannot be faith, for where is thy joy.' Then was I taught, that peace and victory over sin, are essential to faith in the Captain of our salvation: but, that as to the transports of joy, that usually attend the beginning of it, especially in those who have mourned deeply, God sometimes giveth, sometimes withholdeth them, according to the counsels of his own will."

Mr. Wesley's confidence was often interrupted with doubts and fears, which however lasted but a short time, generally vanishing away in prayer. When we consider the constant vicissitude of things around us, the occasions of temptation continually presented to our senses, and the nature of the human constitution, liable to receive various impressions from external things and circumstances against our will; we may pronounce it impossible that we should always enjoy an uniformity, or perpetual sameness of agreeable sensations, and consequently not the same degree of religious joy. Properly speaking, the whole set of sensations arising from the sources just mentioned, with the imaginations of the mind arising from them, whether agreeable, or painful, even to melancholy, are no evidences of our christian state. And therefore the changes in these sensations, however frequent, or painful, are no evidences of any change in our relation to God, because not imputed to us as sin, while the christian temper is preserved. They are, indeed, totally different both in their source, their nature, and their tendency, from those internal feelings of the mind which inseparably accompany convictions for sin, and true justifying faith in Christ. These are produced by the truths of

revealed religion proposed to the understanding, clearly understood, firmly believed, and by the influence of a divine agency accompanying them, applied with energy to our own individual state. Their nature and tendency are equally distinct from the sensations above mentioned. Yet these sensations arising from external causes, and out of our own power to prevent, may in some circumstances rise to that height, as to produce for a season, a cloudiness and heaviness upon the most sincere mind; in which case, the comfort or joy generally following a justified state, will not be so strongly felt, nor so distinctly perceived as before. This is the reason why young converts so generally fall into doubts and perplexities concerning their state, merely through ignorance of the distinction they ought to make, between the effects of sensations on the human constitution occasioned by external objects or circumstances, and the true evidences of their acceptance with God. Hence also we see the principle on which we may safely maintain, that doubts and fears are consistent with justifying faith.

Perhaps it may be said, without incurring the charge of censoriousness, that few preachers of the gospel, have sufficiently studied the present state of human nature, to be able to clear the difficulties which sometimes accompany christian experience. Mr. Wesley was, at present, but a young convert; and therefore we cannot wonder at his perplexities. June 6. He tells us, "I received a letter from Oxford, which threw me into much perplexity. It was asserted therein, 'That no doubting could consist with the least degree of true faith: that whoever at any time felt any doubt or fear, was not *weak in faith*, but had *no faith* at all: and that none hath any faith, till the law of the spirit of life has made him *wholly* free from the law of sin and death.'—Begging of God to direct me, I opened my Testament on 1 Cor. iii. 1, where St. Paul speaks of those whom he terms babes in Christ, who were not able to bear strong meat: nay, who were, in a sense, carnal: to whom he nevertheless says, 'Ye are God's building, ye are the temple of God.' Surely then these men had some degree of faith, though it is plain their faith was but weak."

June 7. "I determined if God should permit, to retire for a short time into Germany. I had fully proposed before I left Georgia, so to do, if it should please God to bring me back to Europe. And I now clearly saw the time was come. My weak mind could not bear to be thus sawn asunder. And I hoped the conversing with those holy men, who were themselves living witnesses of the full power of faith, and yet able to bear with those that are weak, would be a means under God of so establishing my soul, that I might go on from faith to faith, and from strength to strength."

Having taken leave of his mother, he embarked on Tuesday the 13th, accompanied by Mr. Ingham and three others, English, and three Germans. In passing through Holland, he met with great hos-

pitality and friendship, particularly from Dr. Koker, a physician of Rotterdam. The German formalities in admitting strangers into their towns, even in times of peace, gave him and his friends a great deal of trouble, and were peculiarly disagreeable; as they always are to Englishmen, nothing of the kind being known with us. July 4. He arrived at Marienborn, where he found Count Zinzendorf, and others of the brethren, whose Christian conversation greatly refreshed his mind. He was present at their conferences for strangers; at one of which the Count was asked, "Can a man be justified and not know it?" He answered to the following effect. 1. Justification is the forgiveness of sins. 2. The moment a man flies to Christ, he is justified: 3. And has peace with God, but not always joy: 4. Nor perhaps may he know he is justified, till long after: 5. For the assurance of it is distinct from justification. 6. But others may know he is justified by his power over sin, by his seriousness, his love of the brethren, and his hunger and thirst after righteousness, which alone prove the spiritual life to be begun.

In giving this statement, Mr. Wesley has not made any remark on the fourth proposition, which seems to imply that he did not disapprove of it. But certainly it ought not to stand in so unguarded a manner. We know, 1. That if a man be really justified, a very great change has taken place in the state of his mind, which will show itself in his life and conversation. 2. That a man must necessarily be conscious of what has passed within himself, whether the change was instantaneous or gradual. 3. If, therefore, a man do not know that he is justified, when he really is so, it is because he does not understand the true scriptural evidence of a state of justification. This has sometimes been the case; when a man truly convinced of sin, and trusting in Christ for salvation, has not had the happiness to sit under a gospel minister; or, when he has sat under a minister, who, though he preached the doctrines of the gospel, did not rightly divide the word of truth, nor point out to his hearers, the order to be observed in the gradations of christian experience, evidently founded on Scripture and the nature of the human faculties. Such a preacher, will never give his hearers clear and distinct views of the evidences of their state, whatever that state may be.

From Marienborn, Mr. Wesley wrote to his brother Samuel, as follows, "God has given me at length the desire of my heart. I am with a church whose conversation is in heaven, in whom is the mind that was in Christ, and who so walk as he walked. As they have all one Lord and one faith, so they are all partakers of one spirit, the spirit of meekness and love, which uniformly, and continually animates all their conversation. O how high and holy a thing Christianity is! And how widely distant from that—I know not what—which is so called, though it neither purifies the heart, nor renews the life, after the image of our blessed Redeemer.

"I grieve to think how that holy name, by which we are called, must be blasphemed among the heathen, while they see discontented Christians, passionate Christians, resentful Christians, earthly-minded Christians. Yea, to come to what we are apt to count small things, while they see Christians judging one another, ridiculing one another, speaking evil of one another, increasing, instead of bearing one another's burdens. How bitterly would Julian have applied to these, 'See how these Christians love one another.' I know, I myself, I doubt *you* sometimes, and my sister often, have been under this condemnation. O may God grant, we may never more think to do him service, by breaking those commands which are the very life of his religion! But may we utterly put away all anger, and wrath, and malice, and bitterness, and evil-speaking."—O that Mr. Wesley could rise from the dead, to enforce these reproofs on those who have succeeded him in the government of the Methodist societies!

July 19. Mr. Wesley left Marienborn, and August 1, arrived at Hernhuth. Here he staid a fortnight; during which time he had frequent opportunities of conversing with the most experienced of the brethren in that place, of hearing several of them preach, and of acquainting himself with their whole economy. "I would gladly," says he, "have spent my life here; but my Master calling me to labor in another part of his vineyard, on Monday the 14th, I was constrained to take my leave of this happy place—O when shall THIS Christianity cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea." He adds in another place, "I was exceedingly comforted and strengthened by the conversation of this lovely people; and returned to England more fully determined to spend my life in testifying the gospel of the grace of God."

Sept. 16. He arrived again in London, having no intention but to preach the gospel in the churches; and accordingly wherever he was invited, he boldly declared, 'By grace ye are saved through faith.' This doctrine, branched into all its parts, was opposed by most of the clergy; and in most places, the genteel part of the congregation was offended at the crowds that followed him, so that he was frequently told after preaching, that he must preach there no more. This at length became so general, that it amounted to an exclusion from almost all the churches in London. October 9. He met with the Narrative of the revival of the work of God about the town of Northampton, in New England. He sent an extract of this to a friend, whose answer threw him into some perplexity, and occasioned him to enter into a very close examination of himself; which he describes as follows.

"'Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith.' Now the surest test whereby we can examine ourselves, whether we be indeed in the faith, is that given by St. Paul, 'If any man be in Christ he is a new creature. Old things are past away: behold all things are become new.'

"First, His judgments are new: his judgment of himself, of happiness, of holiness.

"He judges himself to be altogether fallen short of the glorious image of God. To have no good thing abiding in him; but all that is corrupt and abominable, &c.—Thus by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of myself. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

"Again. His judgment concerning happiness is new. He would as soon expect to dig it out of the earth, as to find it in riches, honor, pleasure, so called, or indeed, in the enjoyment of any creature: he knows there can be no happiness on earth, but in the enjoyment of God, and in the foretaste of those rivers of pleasure which flow at his right hand for evermore.—Thus by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of happiness. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

"Yet again. His judgment concerning holiness is new. He no longer judges it to be an outward thing: to consist either, in doing no harm, in doing good, or in using the ordinances of God. He sees it is the life of God in the soul; the image of God fresh stamped on the heart; an entire renewal of the mind in every temper and thought, after the likeness of him that created it.—Thus by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of holiness. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

"Secondly, His designs are new. It is the design of his life, not to heap treasures upon earth, not to gain the praise of men, not to indulge the desires of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life; but to regain the image of God; to have the life of God again planted in his soul: and to be renewed after his likeness in righteousness and all true holiness.—This, by the grace of God in Christ, is the design of my life. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

"Thirdly, His desires are new, and indeed all the whole train of his passions and inclinations. They are no longer fixed on earthly things. They are now set on the things of heaven. His love and joy, and hope; his sorrow and fear, have all respect to things above. They all point heavenward. Where his treasure is, there is his heart also. I dare not say I am a new creature in this respect. For other desires often *arise* in my heart. But they do not *reign*. I put them all under my feet through Christ who strengtheneth me. Therefore I believe he is creating me anew in this also, and that he has begun, though not finished his work.

"Fourthly, His conversation is new. It is always seasoned with salt, and fit to minister grace to the hearers. So is mine, by the grace of God in Christ, therefore, in this respect, I am a new creature.

"Fifthly, His actions are new. The tenor of his life, singly points at the glory of God. All his substance and time are devoted thereto. Whether he eats or drinks, or whatever he does, it either springs from, or leads to the glory of God and the good of man.—Such, by

the grace of God in Christ, is the tenor of my life. Therefore, in this respect, I am a new creature." He concludes thus, "Upon the whole, although I have not yet that joy in the Holy Ghost, nor the full assurance of faith, much less am I, in the full sense of the words, in Christ a new creature: I nevertheless trust that I have a measure of faith, and am 'accepted in the beloved:' I trust the hand-writing that was against me is blotted out, and that I am reconciled to God through his Son."

The whole of this examination of himself plainly shows, that however credulous Mr. Wesley might be, with respect to the reports of others, and credulous he certainly was, yet in judging of his own state, he placed no confidence in visions, dreams, or sudden impressions on the mind; but calmly and rationally examined, whether he had true scriptural evidence, that he was passed from death unto life.

October 13. Being at Oxford, he found leisure to write to a few of his friends in Holland and Germany. These letters show us something of the state of his mind, how he was employed, and the success of his labors. To Dr. Koker, of Rotterdam, he wrote as follows: "I have delayed writing till now, in hopes I might have had an opportunity of transcribing the papers you desired, before I wrote. But I find I cannot have time for this yet; it having pleased God to give me full employment of another nature. His blessed Spirit has wrought so powerfully both in London and Oxford, that there is a general awakening, and multitudes are crying out, 'what must we do to be saved?' So that till our gracious Master sendeth more laborers into his harvest, all my time is much too little for them.

"May our blessed Lord repay seven-fold into your bosoms, the kindness showed to us for his name's sake! that, you may be found in him, not having your own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, is the earnest prayer of, dear sir, your unworthy brother in Christ."

"TO MR. INGHAM, AT HERNHUTH.

"O my dear brother, God hath been wonderfully gracious to us, ever since our return to England. Though there are many adversaries, yet a great door and effectual is opened; and we continue, through evil report and good report, to preach the gospel of Christ to all people, and earnestly to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Indeed he hath given unto us many of our fiercest opposers, who now receive with meekness the ingrafted word. One of the bitterest of them could have no rest in his spirit, till on Saturday, the 30th of September, O. S. he was compelled to send for me, who knew him not, so much as by face, and to tell me the secrets of his heart. He owned with many tears, that in spite of all his endeavors, he was still carnal, sold under sin: that he continually did the thing he would

not, and was thereby convinced of the entire corruption of his whole nature: that the very night before, after the most solemn resolutions to the contrary, he had been guilty of gross drunkenness, and had no hope of escaping, having neither spirit nor strength left in him. We fell on our knees, and besought our Lord to bring this sinner unto God, who through his blood justifieth the ungodly. He arose, and his countenance was no longer sad; for he knew, and testified aloud, that he was passed from death unto life, and felt in himself, that he was healed of his plague. And from that hour to this, he hath had peace and joy in believing, and sin hath no more dominion over him.

"Mr. Stonehouse hath at length determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified; and to preach unto all, remission of sins through faith in his blood. Mr. Sparkes also, is a teacher of sound doctrine. Mr. Hutchins is strong in the faith, and mightily convinces gainsayers, so that no man hitherto hath been able to stand before him. Mr. Kinchin, Gombold, and Wells, have not yet received comfort but are patiently waiting for it. Mr. Robson, who is now a minister of Christ also, is full of faith, and peace, and love. So is Mr. Combes, a little child, who was called to minister in holy things two or three weeks ago. Indeed I trust our Lord will let us see, and that shortly, a multitude of priests that believe. My brother and I, are partly here, and partly in London, till Mr. Whitefield, or some other, is sent to release us from hence.

"Pray for us continually, my dear brother, that we may make full proof of our ministry; and may ourselves stand fast in the grace of our Lord Jesus: and as soon as you can, send word of what he is doing by and for you."

"TO COUNT ZINZENDORF, AT MARIENBORN.

"May our gracious Lord, who counteth whatsover is done to the least of his brethren, as done to himself, return seven-fold to you and the Countess, and to all the brethren, the kindnesses you did to us! It would have been a great satisfaction to me, if I could have spent more time with the Christians who love one another. But that could not be now; my Master having called me to work in another part of his vineyard. Nor did I return hither at all before the time: for though a great door and effectual had been opened, the adversaries had laid so many stumbling-blocks before it, that the weak were daily turned out of the way. Numberless misunderstandings had arisen, by means of which the way of truth was much blasphemed: and thence had sprung anger, clamor, bitterness, evil-speaking, envyings, strifes, railings, evil-surmises; whereby the enemy had gained such an advantage over the little flock, that of the rest durst no man join himself to them.

"But it has now pleased our blessed Master to remove, in great

measure, these rocks of offence. The word of the Lord again runs and is glorified; and his work goes on and prospers. Great multitudes are every where awakened, and cry out, 'What must we do to be saved?' Many of them see, that there is only one name under heaven whereby they can be saved: and more and more of those who seek it, find salvation in his name: and these are of one heart and one soul. They all love one another, and are knit together in one body, and one spirit, as in one faith, and one hope of their calling. The love and zeal of our brethren in Holland and Germany, particularly at Hernhuth, has stirred up many among us, who will not be comforted till they also partake of the great and precious promises. I hope, if God permit, to see them at least once more, were it only to give them the fruit of my love, the speaking freely on a few things which I did not approve, perhaps because I did not understand them. May our merciful Lord give you a right judgment in all things, and make you to abound more and more in all lowliness and meekness, in all simplicity and godly sincerity, in all watchfulness and seriousness: in a word, in all faith and love, particularly to those that are without; till you are merciful as your father which is in heaven is merciful! I desire your constant and earnest prayers, that he would vouchsafe me a portion of the same spirit."

"To the Church of God which is in Hernhuth, John Wesley, an unworthy presbyter of the Church of God in England, wisheth all grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ. October 14.

"Glory be to God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for his unspeakable gift! for giving me to be an eye-witness of your faith, and love, and holy conversation in Christ Jesus. I have borne testimony thereof with all plainness of speech, in many parts of Germany, and thanks have been given to God by many on your behalf.

"We are endeavoring here also, by the grace which is given us, to be followers of you, as ye are of Christ. Fourteen were added to us since our return, so that we have now eight bands of men, consisting of fifty-six persons, all of whom seek for salvation only in the blood of Christ. As yet we have only two small bands of women, the one of three, the other of five persons. But here are many others who only wait till we have leisure to instruct them, how they may most effectually build up one another in the faith and love of him who gave himself for them.

"Though my brother and I, are not permitted to preach in most of the churches in London, yet, thanks be to God, there are others left, wherein we have liberty to speak the truth as it is in Jesus. Likewise every evening, and on set evenings in the week at two several places, we publish the word of reconciliation, sometimes to twenty or thirty, sometimes to fifty or sixty, sometimes to three or four hun-

dred persons, met together to hear it. We begin and end all our meetings with singing and prayer: and we know that our Lord heareth our prayer, having more than once or twice, and this was not done in a corner, received our petitions in that very hour.

"Nor hath he left himself without other witnesses of his grace and truth. Ten ministers I know now in England, who lay the right foundation, 'The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin.' Over and above whom, I have found one Anabaptist, and one, if not two of the teachers among the Presbyterians here, who, I hope, love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and teach the way of God in truth.

"O cease not, ye that are highly favored, to beseech our Lord that he would be with us even to the end; to remove that which is displeasing in his sight, to support that which is weak among us, to give us the whole mind that was in him, and teach us to walk even as he walked! And may the very God of peace fill up what is wanting in your faith, and build you up more and more in all lowliness of mind, in all plainness of speech, in all zeal and watchfulness; that he may present you to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that ye may be holy and unblameable in the day of his appearing."

We should not do justice to Mr. Wesley, were we to suppose, that he meant in this letter to insinuate, there were only ten clergymen in England who preached the gospel. He particularly refers to those he personally knew, who had been lately awakened out of sleep, and now saw the way of salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. And his principles and connexions, as a high churchman, had separated him from all denominations of Dissenters, so that he could have had very little acquaintance with them. Perhaps the three to whom he refers, were all he could speak of from his own personal knowledge; though no doubt many others taught the way of God in truth.

Mr. Wesley pursued his labors with unremitting diligence, spending his time from an early hour in the morning, till night, in preaching, exhorting, praying, or conversing with the people, on subjects that related to christian experience. November 22. He again wrote to three or four of his religious friends, and spake more freely than before, of the state of his own mind.

"TO DR. KOKER, AT ROTTERDAM.

"My desire and prayer to God is, that the glorious gospel of his Son, may run and be glorified, among you as it doth among us; and much more abundantly! I should rejoice to hear, what our Lord hath done for you also. Is the number of believers multiplied? Do they love one another? Are they all of one heart and one soul? Do they build up one another, in the knowledge and love of our Lord Jesus Christ? May he multiply your little flock a thousand fold, how many soever you be! May he fill you with all peace and joy in believing! May he preserve you in all lowliness of spirit! And

may he enable you to use great plainness of speech, both toward each other, and toward all men; and by manifestation of the truth, to commend yourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God!

"Even to this hour, I have not had one day's leisure, to transcribe for you the papers I brought from Hernhuth: the harvest here also, is so plenteous, and the laborers so few; and it increases upon us daily. Verily the spirit of the Lord hath lift up his standard against the iniquity which had overspread our land as a flood! O pray ye for us, that he would send more laborers into his harvest! And that he would enable us whom he hath already sent, to approve ourselves faithful ministers of the New Covenant, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report! In particular let all the brethren and sisters who are with you, pray that God would warm with his love, the cold heart of, dear sir, your much obliged and very affectionate brother in Christ, J. Wesley."

"TO MR. VINEY, AT YSSELSTEIN.

"After a long sleep, there seems now to be a great awakening in this place also. The spirit of the Lord hath already shaken the dry bones, and some of them stand up and live. But I am still dead and cold; having peace indeed, but no love or joy in the Holy Ghost. O pray for me, that I may see and feel myself a sinner, and have a full interest in the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world!" &c.

"TO ISAAC LE-LONG, AT AMSTERDAM.

"Do not think my dear brother that I have forgotten you. I cannot forget you, because I love you: though I cannot love any one yet, as I ought, because I cannot love our blessed Lord, *as I ought.* My heart is cold and senseless: it is indeed a heart of stone. Pray for me, and let all your household pray for me, yea and all the brethren also, that our God would give me a broken heart; a loving heart; a heart wherein his spirit may delight to dwell.

"May our good Lord repay you all a thousand fold for the love you showed to us. How does his gospel prosper at Amsterdam? Are believers multiplied? and is his grace mighty among you? Is their name yet cast out as evil (for that must be the next) and do men despitefully use you, and persecute you? I want you to say a great deal to me of it. But above all, I want you to pray a great deal, for your poor, weak brother, John Wesley."

We see by these letters, that Mr. Wesley was not carried up on high as on eagles' wings, by any extatic joy which obliterated the common feelings of human nature: he walked in the valley, humble and low, bemoaning his condition, and struggling against the dulness and sluggishness of his own heart. Had he been actuated in his labors, only by a religious fervor of mind, his diligence would not have been so uniform as it was, nor his perseverance so lasting. Our

passions and inward feelings are necessarily variable; and if we are impelled only by these, in a religious course of life, or in any other laudable pursuit, our diligence will remit, and our perseverance be short, especially when temptation and interest draw another way. Mr. Wesley acted on a different principle. He had a strong conviction, founded on cool reflection, that he was every day doing what God required him to do: he considered his success in turning sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of satan to God, as a testimony of the divine approbation of his conduct; and therefore believed, that he was laboring for the best interests of his fellow mortals. This conviction was so strong that no persecution or opposite interest could ever divert him from his pursuits.

December 11. Hearing Mr. Whitefield was returned from Georgia, he went to London to meet him, and they again took sweet counsel together. January 1, 1739. He was present at a love-feast in Fetter-Lane, together with Mr. Hall, Kinchin, Ingham, Whitefield, Hutchins, and his brother Charles; and about sixty of the brethren. "About three in the morning," says he, "as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of His majesty, we broke out with one voice, 'We praise Thee, O God; we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.'"—How little does the world know; how little do merely speculative and formal Christians know, of these refreshing, invigorating seasons which come from the presence of the Lord, and give to the true worshippers a demonstrative evidence of the truth of Christianity!

In the spring Mr. Whitefield went down to Bristol, and there first began to preach in the open air, to incredible numbers of people. Mr. Wesley continued his labors in London and Oxford alternately, and occasionally in the neighboring places without any intention of altering his usual manner of proceeding. But in the latter end of March, he received a letter from Mr. Whitefield, who entreated him in the most pressing manner to come to Bristol, evidently with intention that he might step into this new path which now lay open before him. At first he was not at all forward to comply with the request; and his brother Charles, and some others, warmly opposed his going; from an unaccountable apprehension that it would prove fatal to him.* At length Mr. Wesley freely gave himself up, to whatever the Lord should appoint. It was a rule of the society, "That any person who desired, or designed to take a journey, should first, if it were possible, have the approbation of the bands:" so entirely were the ministers, at this time, under the direction of the people! Accordingly on the 28th, the matter was laid before them, and after some debate they determined that he should comply with Mr. Whitefield's request. He left London the next day, and on the 31st came to Bristol.

* See vol. i. page 128.

THE

LIFE OF THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

BOOK THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

CONTAINING A VIEW OF MR. WESLEY'S LABORS AS AN ITINERANT PREACHER, AND OF THE FORMATION OF SOCIETIES, &c. TILL THE FIRST METHODIST-CONFERENCE, IN 1744.

I HAVE now traced the steps of Mr. Wesley, from his infancy to the present period, which forms an important era in his life. He now commenced a Field-preacher, as he was called, and itinerancy naturally followed, which laid the foundation of the present system of Methodism. It has often been suggested by his opponents, that the plan of Methodism was the result of a long premeditated design: but on a careful examination into the very *minutiæ* of his life till this time, no such design appears. He positively asserts the contrary; and every circumstance collected from his private papers, confirms the truth of his assertion. It is indeed true, that by a strange chain of providences, he was admirably fitted without any design of his own, to prosecute the plan he now entered upon through all its consequences. After many years of painful labor and exercise of mind, he had obtained clear and distinct views of the gospel; and what was especially necessary to his success, he well understood the order observable in the gradations of christian experience, from the first commencement of a work of grace on the mind, to its consummation. He had long been inured to fatigue and hardship; a qualification highly necessary for the success of his present plan of proceedings. He had experienced great opposition, contempt, reproach, and even persecution, both in England and America; which made them appear in the prospect of his new undertaking less formidable to him, than they would have done to others. Most of the churches in London had been shut against him, so that his opportunities of preaching became very limited, and as he durst not be silent, he was reduced to a sort of necessity to preach in the open air, in opposition to his former notions and habits. But he observes, "I have since seen abundant

reason to adore the wise providence of God herein, making a way for myriads of people, who never troubled any church, or were likely so to do, to hear that word which they soon found to be the power of God unto salvation."

April 1. Mr. Whitefield having left Bristol, Mr. Wesley began to expound to a little society, accustomed to meet in Nicholas-Street, our Lord's sermon on the mount; "One pretty remarkable precedent," says he, "of field-preaching, though I suppose *there were churches* at that time also. Monday the second, I submitted to be *more vile*, and proclaimed in the highways the glad-tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people."—His preaching was attended with surprising success, so that in a very short time, a few, and afterwards a greater number, agreed to meet together, to edify and strengthen one another, as the people already did in London.

Mr. Wesley continued in Bristol and the neighboring places till June. He thus describes his public labors through the week. "My ordinary employment in public, was now as follows: every morning I read prayers and preached at Newgate. Every evening I expounded a portion of Scripture, at one or more of the societies. On Monday in the afternoon I preached abroad near Bristol; on Tuesday at Bath and Two-mile Hill, alternately. On Wednesday, at Baptist-Mills. Every other Thursday, near Pensford. Every other Friday, in another part of Kingswood. On Saturday in the afternoon, and Sunday morning, in the Bowling-Green. On Sunday at eleven, near Hannam-Mount; at two at Clifton; at five, at Rose-Green. And hitherto, *as my day is*, so is my strength."—He tells us, he could scarcely reconcile himself at first, to this strange way of preaching in the fields, of which Mr. Whitefield had set him the example; "Having been," says he, "till very lately so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls *almost a sin*, if it had not been done *in a church*."

During this summer, his preaching at Bristol was attended with some extraordinary circumstances, which made much noise, and gave great offence. Under the sermon, some persons trembled from head to foot: others, fell down and cried out with a loud and bitter cry: whilst others became speechless, and seemed convulsed as if in the agonies of death. After prayer for them, many rose up rejoicing in God, and testifying, they had redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.—Some afterwards said, they had so strong a representation of Christ to their mind at that time, that it seemed like a vision of him, evidently set forth crucified among them: and in that moment they were enabled to believe on him. Others pretended they had a similar representation of him in a dream, and through faith received the remission of sins. No regard ought to be had to these declarations, as evidences of conversion; because the judgment of these persons must be greatly

confused, while their passions were so much agitated. Mr. Wesley himself, at first knew not how he ought to judge of these extraordinary things; but when he found that most of the persons so affected, held fast their confidence, and walked worthy of their christian calling, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, he could not deny that there was a real genuine work of grace upon their minds. He did not however consider agitations, visions, or dreams, as any evidence of a true conversion to God; but as adventitious or accidental circumstances, which from various causes might, or might not, attend it: and this view of them, he thought perfectly consistent with Scripture. The gentle manner in which, under these views, he spake of them was generally misunderstood, raised up several adversaries, and made the good that was really done, be evil spoken of. He gave a particular account from time to time of the things that happened, to such ministers as he thought sincerely desired the increase of God's kingdom, and had some experience of it. Mr. Ralph Erskine was very favorable in his judgment of these adventitious circumstances; and says, "I desire to bless my Lord, for the great and good news your letter bears, about the Lord's turning many souls 'from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God;' and that such a great and effectual door is opened among you as the many adversaries cannot shut.—As to the outward manner you speak of, wherein most of them were affected who were cut to the heart by the sword of the spirit, no wonder this was at first surprising to you, since they are indeed so very rare, that have been thus pricked and wounded. Yet some of the instances you give, seem to be exemplified in the outward manner wherein Paul, and the jailor, were at first affected; as also Peter's hearers, Acts ii.—What influence sudden and sharp awakenings may have on the body, I pretend not to explain: but I make no question satan, so far as he gets power, may exert himself on such occasions, partly to hinder the good work in the persons thus touched with the sharp arrows of conviction, and partly to disparage the work of God, as if it tended to lead people to distraction.—However, the merciful issue of the conflicts in the conversion of the persons thus affected, is the main thing.

"All the outward appearances of people's being affected among us, may be reduced to these two sorts; one is, hearing with a close, silent attention, with gravity and greediness, discovered by fixed looks, weeping eyes, and sorrowful or joyful countenances; another sort is, when they lift up their voice aloud, some more depressedly, and others more highly; and at times the whole multitude in a flood of tears, all as it were crying out at once, till their voices be ready to drown the minister's, that he can scarce be heard for the weeping noise that surrounds him.—The influence on some of these, like a land flood, dries up; we hear of no change wrought. But on others it appears in the fruits of righteousness, and the tract of a holy conversation."

It seems from this letter, that Mr. Wesley was not the only gospel minister, whose discourses were, at certain times, attended with uncommon effects on the minds of the hearers.

Mr. Samuel Wesley judged much more unfavorably of the outward circumstances attending his brother's preaching; and in some respects denied the assurance of the pardon of sins, which the people professed to experience. A correspondence took place on these subjects, between him and Mr. John Wesley, a part of which has already been published by Dr. Priestley, in his collection of *Original Letters by the Rev. John Wesley*," &c. But as this correspondence stands there in a mutilated state, it may mislead the judgment of some persons, not much acquainted with the history of *Methodism:* I therefore think it necessary, that the reader may do justice to Mr. Wesley's character, to give a more complete view of it, and occasionally to add a remark for further illustration of the subject.

This correspondence commenced in the latter end of the year 1738; but I have referred the account of it to this place, that I might give the whole of it together. The first letter on this controversy, which has been preserved, was written by Mr. John Wesley, and dated the 30th of October. He observes to his brother Samuel, "That you will always receive kindly, what is so intended, I doubt not.—With regard to my own character, and my doctrine likewise, I shall answer you very plainly. By a Christian, I mean one who so believes in *Christ*, as that sin hath no more dominion over him; and in this obvious sense of the word, I was not a Christian till May the 24th, last past. For till then sin had the dominion over me, although I fought with it continually; but surely then, from that time to this, it hath not; such is the free grace of God in *Christ*. What sins they were, which till then reigned over me, and from which, by the grace of God, I am now free, I am ready to declare on the house-top, if it may be for the glory of God.

"If you ask by what means I am made free (though not perfect, neither infallibly sure of my perseverance) I answer, by faith in Christ; by such a sort or degree of faith, as I had not till that day. Some measure of this faith, which bringeth salvation or victory over sin, and which implies peace and trust in God through Christ, I do now enjoy by his free mercy: though in very deed, it is in me but as a grain of mustard seed: for the πληροφορια πιςεως, the seal of the spirit, the love of God shed abroad in my heart, and producing joy in the Holy Ghost; joy which no man taketh away; joy unspeakable and full of glory; this witness of the spirit I have not, but I patiently wait for it, I know many who have already received it; more than one or two, in the very hour we were praying for it. And having seen and spoken with a cloud of witnesses abroad, as well as in my own country, I cannot doubt but that believers who wait and pray for it, will find these Scriptures fulfilled in themselves.

My hope is that they will be fulfilled in me; I build on Christ the rock of ages: on his sure mercies described in his word; and on his promises, all which I know are yea, and Amen. Those who have not yet received joy in the Holy Ghost, the love of God, and the *plerophory* of faith (any, or all of which I take to be the witness of the Spirit with our spirit, that we are the sons of God) I believe to be Christians in that imperfect sense wherein I call myself such; and I exhort them to pray, that God would give them also, 'to rejoice in hope of the glory of God,' and to feel his 'love shed abroad in their hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them.'

"On men I build not, neither on Matilda Chipman's word, whom I have not talked with five minutes in my life; nor anything peculiar in the weak, well-meant relation of William Hervey, who yet is a serious humble acting Christian. But have you built nothing on these? Yes; I find them more or less, in almost every letter you have written on the subject. Yet were all that has been said on *visions, dreams, and balls of fire,* to be fairly proposed in syllogisms, I believe it would not prove a jot more on one, than on the other side of the question.

"O brother, would to God you would leave disputing concerning the things which you know not, if indeed you know them not, and beg of God to fill up what is wanting in you. Why should not you also seek till you receive, 'that peace of God which passeth understanding?' Who shall hinder you, notwithstanding the manifold temptations, from rejoicing with joy unspeakable, by reason of glory? Amen! Lord Jesus! May you and all who are near of kin to you, if you have it not already, feel his love shed abroad in your hearts, by his spirit which dwelleth in you, and be sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of your inheritance."

November 15. Mr. Samuel Wesley, answered, "I have many remarks to make on your letter, but do not care to fight in the dark, or run my head against a stone wall. You need fear no controversy with me, unless you hold it worth while to remove these three doubts. —1. Whether you will own, or disown in terms, the necessity of a sensible information from God of pardon? If you disown it, the matter is over as to you: if you own it, then, 2. Whether you will not think me distracted, to oppose you with the most infallible of all proofs, inward feeling in yourself, and positive evidence in your friends, while I myself produce neither. 3. Whether you will release me from the horns of your dilemma, that I must either talk without knowledge like a fool, or against it like a knave? I conceive neither part strikes—for a man may reasonably argue against what he never felt, and may honestly deny what he has felt, to be necessary to others.

"You build nothing on tales, but I do. I see what is manifestly built upon them; if you disclaim it, and warn poor shallow pates of

their folly and danger, so much the better. They are counted signs or tokens, means or conveyances, proofs or evidences, of the sensible information, &c. calculated to turn fools into madmen, and put them without a jest, into the condition of Oliver's porter.—When I hear visions, &c. reproved, discouraged, and ceased among the new brotherhood, I shall then say no more of them; but till then, I will use my utmost strength which God shall give me, to expose these bad branches of a bad root.

"Such doctrine as encourages, and abets, spiritual fire-balls, apparitions of the Father, &c., &c., is delusive and dangerous: but the sensible information, &c. is such; *ergo.*—I mention not this to enter into any dispute with you, for you seem to disapprove, though not expressly disclaim them; but to convince you I am not out of my way, though encountering of wind-mills."

This letter appears to be full of fallacy. To give one instance. Mr. J. Wesley had said, the witness of the spirit was the common privilege of believers: that he considered joy in the Holy Ghost, the love of God, and the *plerophory* of faith, as the witness of the Spirit with our spirit, that we are the sons of God: that the whole of what had been said on "visions, dreams, and balls of fire," could not, in his opinion, either prove or disprove the point in question between them; that is, visions, dreams, and balls of fire, were totally foreign to the witness of the Spirit, for which he was contending. But his brother Samuel changes the term *witness*, and substitutes for it, *sensible information;* by which he means, something visible to the sight, or existing in the fancy, and then indeed visions, &c. were connected with the question; and he reasons on this supposition. But this was a mere sophism, of which Mr. J. Wesley would probably have taken notice had he been writing to a stranger, or had he foreseen that any one would print the letters after his death. November 30. He replied to his brother Samuel, and tells him, "I believe every Christian who has not yet received it, ought to pray for, 'the witness of God's Spirit with his spirit, that he is a child of God!' In being a child of God, the pardon of his sins is included: therefore I believe the Spirit of God will witness this also. That this witness is from God, the very terms imply; and this witness I believe is necessary for my salvation. How far invincible ignorance may excuse others, I know not.

"But this you say, is delusive and dangerous, 'Because it encourages and abets, idle visions and dreams.' It 'encourages'—True; accidentally, but not essentially. And that it does this accidentally, or that weak minds may pervert it to an ill use, is no reasonable objection against it: for so they may pervert every truth in the oracles of God; more especially that dangerous doctrine of Joel, cited by St. Peter: 'It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your

daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.'—Such visions indeed, as you mention are given up: does it follow that visions and dreams in general, are bad branches of a bad root? God forbid. This would prove more than you desire."

December 13. Mr. Samuel Wesley again wrote to his brother. He now discussed the matter a little more soberly, and kept closer to the point in debate. He says, "That you were not a Christian before May, in your sense, any one may allow: but have you ever since continued sinless?—'Sin has not the dominion!' Do you never then fall? Or, do you mean no more, than that you are free from presumptuous sins? If the former, I deny it: if the latter, who disputes? Your misapplication of the witness of the spirit is so thoroughly cleared by Bishop Bull, that I shall not hold a candle to the sun. What portion of love, joy, &c. God may please to bestow on Christians, is in his hand, not ours. Those texts you quote no more prove them generally necessary, in what you call your imperfect state, than, 'rejoice in the Lord always,' contradicts—'Blessed are they that mourn'—I had much more to say, but it will keep, if ever it should be proper."

In the beginning of the present year, 1739, Mr. J. Wesley replied to his brother. A part of this letter I have not been able to find.* In what remains, he tells him, "I think Bishop Bull's sermon on the witness of the Spirit (against the witness of the Spirit it should rather be entitled) is full of gross perversions of Scripture; and manifest contradictions both to Scripture and experience. I find more persons, day by day, who experience a clear evidence of their being in a state of salvation. But I never said this continues equally clear in all, as long as they continue in a state of salvation. Some indeed have testified, and the whole tenor of their life made their testimony unexceptionable, that, from that hour they have felt no agonies at all, no anxious fears, no sense of dereliction. Others have.

"But I much fear, we begin our dispute at the wrong end. I fear you *dissent* from the fundamental Articles of the Church of England. I know Bishop Bull does—I doubt you do not hold justification by faith alone: if not, neither do you hold, what our Articles teach concerning the extent and guilt of original sin: neither do you feel yourself a lost sinner; and if we begin not here, we are building on the sand. O may the God of love, if my sister or you are otherwise minded, reveal even this unto you."

* Mr. Wesley's papers have been separated, and parts of them selected several times, I believe for the Magazines, and for his other publications: for some years also, they have been so much exposed to various persons, that probably some have been lost. On these accounts they are, as might be expected, much mangled, and on many subjects rendered very defective.

"*Tiverton, March* 26.

"Dear Jack,

"I might as well have wrote immediately after your last, as now, for any new information that I expected from my mother: and I might as well let it alone at present, for any effect it will have, farther than showing you, I neither despise you on the one hand, nor am angry with you on the other. I am persuaded you will hardly see me face to face in this world, though somewhat nearer than Count Zinzendorf. Charles has at last told me in terms—he believes no more of dreams and visions than I do. Had you said so, I believe I should hardly have spent any time upon them; though I find others credit them, whatever you may do. You make two degrees or kinds of assurance; that neither of them are necessary to a state of salvation, I prove thus;

"1. Because multitudes are saved without either. These are of three sorts, 1. All infants baptised, who die before actual sin. 2. All persons of a melancholy and gloomy constitution; who, without a miracle, cannot be changed. 3. All penitents, who live a good life after their recovery, and yet never attain to their first state.

"2. The lowest assurance is an impression from God who is infallible, that heaven shall be actually enjoyed by the person to whom it is made. How is this consistent with fears of miscarriage: with deep sorrow, and going on the way weeping? How can any doubt, after such certificate? If they can, then here is an assurance whereby the person who has it is not sure.

"3. If this be essential to a state of salvation, it is utterly impossible any should fall from that state finally: since, how can any thing be more fixed, than what Truth and Power has said he will perform? Unless you will say of the matter here, as I observed of the person, that there may be assurance wherein the thing itself is not certain. We join in love. I am your affectionate friend and brother,

"S. Wesley."

April 4. Mr. John Wesley replied from Bristol. "I rejoice greatly," says he, "at the temper with which you now write, and trust there is not only mildness, but love in your heart. If so, you shall know of this doctrine, whether it be of God; though perhaps not by my ministry.

"To this hour you have pursued an *ignoratio elenchi.* Your assurance and mine are as different as light from darkness. I mean, an assurance that I am now in a state of salvation; you, an assurance that I shall persevere therein. The very definition of the term cuts off your second and third observation. As to the first I would take notice; 1. No kind of assurance, that I know, or of faith, or repentance, is essential to their salvation who die infants. 2. I believe God is ready to give all true penitents, who fly to his grace in Christ, a fuller sense of pardon than they had before they fell. I know this to

be true of several; whether these are exempt cases I know not. 3. Persons that were of a melancholy and gloomy constitution, even to some degree of madness, I have known brought in a moment (let it be called a miracle, I quarrel not) into a state of firm lasting peace and joy.

"My dear brother, the whole question turns chiefly, if not wholly on matter of fact. You deny, that God does now work these effects: at least, that he works them in such a manner. I affirm both because I have heard those facts with my ears, and seen them with my eyes. I have seen, as far as it can be seen, very many persons changed in a moment, from the spirit of horror, fear, and despair, to the spirit of hope, joy, peace; and from sinful desires, till then reigning over them, to a pure desire of doing the will of God. These are matters of fact, whereof I have been, and almost daily am, eye or ear witness. This I know, several persons in whom this great change from the power of satan unto God, was wrought either in sleep, or during a strong representation to the eye of their minds of Christ, either on the cross, or in glory. This is the fact. Let any judge of it as they please. But that such a change was then wrought, appears not from their shedding tears only, or sighing, or singing psalms, but from the whole tenor of their life, till then many ways wicked; from that time holy, just, and good.

"I will show you him that was a lion till then, and is now a lamb; he that was a drunkard, but now exemplarily sober: the whoremonger that was, who now abhors the very lusts of the flesh. These are my living arguments for what I assert, that God now, as aforetime, gives remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost; which may be called visions."

April 16. Mr. Samuel Wesley rejoined. "I find brevity has made me obscure. I argue against assurance in your, or any sense, as part of the gospel covenant; because many are saved without it—you own you cannot deny exempt cases, which is giving up the dispute. *Your assurance*, being a clear impression of God upon the soul, I say must be perpetual—must be irreversible. Else it is not assurance from God, infallible and omnipotent. You say the cross is strongly represented to the eye of the mind.—Do these words signify in plain English, the *fancy?* Inward eyes, ears, and feelings, are nothing to other people. I am heartily sorry such alloy should be found among so much piety."

We now see this controversy reduced to two points: *assurance* itself, and the manner of receiving it. Mr. John Wesley still maintained his former positions, and, May 10, tells his brother, "The gospel promises to you and me, and to our children, and to all that are afar off, even as many of those whom the Lord our God shall call, as are not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 'the witness of God's Spirit with their spirit, that they are the children of God:' that

they are now, at this hour, all accepted in the beloved: but it witnesses not, that they always shall be.' It is an assurance of present salvation only; therefore not necessarily perpetual, neither irreversible.

"I am one of many witnesses of this matter of fact, that God does now make good this his promise daily, very frequently during a representation (how made I know not, but not to the outward eye) of Christ, either hanging on the cross, or standing on the right hand of God. This I know to be of God, because from that hour the person so affected is a new creature, both as to his inward tempers and outward life. Old things are passed away; and all things become new."

Mr. Wesley did not remember, that after this time he received any letter from his brother. But there is one in Dr. Priestley's collection, signed Samuel Wesley, and addressed to his brother John; in which he tells him, "you yourself doubted at first, and inquired, and examined about the extacies; the matter therefore, is not so plain as motion to a man walking. But I have my own reason, as well as your own authority, against the exceeding clearness of divine interposition there.' Your followers fall into agonies. I confess it. They are freed from them after you have prayed over them. Granted. They say it is God's doing. I own they say so. Dear brother, where is your ocular demonstration? Where, indeed, the rational proof? Their living well afterwards may be a probable and sufficient argument, that they believe themselves; but it goes no further."

Upon a review of the whole of this controversy, we may safely pronounce that the doctrine of assurance is in no respect invalidated, or rendered doubtful by any thing Mr. Samuel Wesley has said against it. But the subject will be further considered in reviewing Mr. Wesley's doctrines. Mr. John Wesley affirmed, that he had known several persons, who had received this assurance of the pardon of sins, in a kind of vision or dream; but his brother's objections against the possibility of his knowing this, are in general convincing and satisfactory. Indeed there could be no evidence of this, but their own testimony; which, if convinced of their sincerity, Mr. Wesley was always too much disposed to believe. It is true, he built no fundamental doctrine of the gospel, on the testimony persons gave of their own experience; but some of his opinions in matters of less importance, and in which he appeared most singular, were chiefly supported by such kind of evidence, which the goodness of his own mind disposed him to receive as a sufficient proof.

It is observable in the course of this dispute, that Mr. Samuel Wesley's mind was much softened towards his brother; and the opposition he at first made against his brother's doctrine, and manner of proceeding, became less violent. In the last letter he wrote, he says not a word against assurance, though he does against the manner in

which it was said persons had received it. This seems to imply, that he no longer opposed the thing itself, when properly explained and guarded. At the bottom of the last letter but one, he addressed his brother in these words, *Τὸ λοιπὸν, ἀδελφῷ, προσεύχεσθον περὶ ἡμῶν. κ. τ. λ.** "Finally, brethren, pray ye both for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you." See Thess. iii. 1. A strange address this, if he believed his two brothers were preaching false and dangerous doctrines! The truth seems to be, that he thought more favorably of their doctrines and methods of proceeding, when he wrote these words, than he did when they first set out.—After persevering fifty years, through all kinds of difficulty, the two brothers extorted from the public the same favorable opinion.

Some years after this period, Mr. Wesley expressed his opinion more fully concerning those agitations, &c. which attended the conviction of sin under his sermons this summer at Bristol. He supposes, it is easy to account for them either on principles of reason or Scripture. "First," says he, "on principles of reason. For how easy is it to suppose that a strong, lively, and sudden apprehension of the heinousness of sin, the wrath of God, and the bitter pains of eternal death should affect the body as well as the soul, during the present laws of vital union; should interrupt or disturb the ordinary circulations, and put nature out of its course. Yea, we may question whether, while this union subsists, it be possible for the mind to be affected in so violent a degree, without some or other of those bodily symptoms following.

"It is likewise easy to account for these things on principles of Scripture. For when we take a view of them in this light, we are to add to the consideration of natural causes, the agency of those spirits who still excel in strength, and as far as they have leave from God, will not fail to torment whom they cannot destroy; to tear those that are coming to Christ. It is also remarkable, that there is plain Scripture precedent of every symptom which has lately appeared. So that we cannot allow even the conviction attended with these to be madness, without giving up both reason and Scripture."†

After eight or nine days' absence, in which he came to London, Mr. Wesley returned to Bristol, and continued his labors with increasing success. He was now attacked by *friends* as well as enemies, for his irregularity. To a friend‡ who had expostulated with him on this subject, he wrote his thoughts in a letter, of which the following is an extract. "As to your advice that I should settle in

* I suppose he refers to his two brothers, John and Charles, as he has put the verb and noun in the dual number.

† Wesley's Works, vol. xiv. page 323.

‡ I believe, the late Rev. James Harvey, who had been his pupil; and was the author of Theron and Aspasio; Meditations, &c. &c.

college, I have no business there, having now no office, and no pupils. And whether the other branch of your proposal be expedient, viz. to accept of a cure of souls, it will be time enough to consider when one is offered to me. But in the mean time, you think, I ought to be still; because otherwise I should invade another's office.—You accordingly ask, how it is that I assemble Christians who are none of my charge, to sing psalms, and pray, and hear the Scriptures expounded: and think it hard to justify doing this, in other men's parishes, upon catholic principles?

"Permit me to speak plainly. If by catholic principles, you mean any other than spiritual, they weigh nothing with me: I allow no other rule, whether of faith or practice, than the holy Scriptures. But on scriptural principles, I do not think it hard to justify whatever I do. God in Scripture commands me, according to my power, to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man forbids me to do this, in another's parish; that is, in effect, not to do it at all; seeing I have now no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall. Whom then shall I hear? God, or man? If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge you. A dispensation of the gospel is committed to me, and woe is me if I preach not the gospel. But where shall I preach it upon the principles you mention?—Not in any of the christian parts, at least, of the habitable earth. For all these are, after a sort, divided into parishes.—Suffer me to tell you my principles in this matter. I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty, to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad-tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to: and sure I am, that his blessing attends it. Great encouragement have I therefore, to be faithful in fulfilling the work he hath given me to do. His servant I am, and as such am employed according to the plain direction of his word, as I have opportunity, doing good to all men. And his providence clearly concurs with his word; which has disengaged me from all things else, that I might singly attend on this very thing, and go about doing good."—We have here a specimen of the manner in which Mr. Wesley reasoned, to satisfy himself that his conduct was justifiable before God and man. His arguments are taken from the obligation laid upon him to preach the gospel, the necessity of his situation, and the success of his labors. It is evident through the whole of his history, that, in addition to the two first considerations, the success of his labors in diffusing knowledge among the people, and in reforming their manners, bore down all objections in his own mind, against the irregularity of his proceedings.

About the middle of August, Mr. Wesley had a conversation with the Bishop of Bristol, on justification by faith alone; a part of which has been preserved.

Bishop. "Why, sir, our faith itself is a good work, it is a virtuous temper of mind."

Wesley. "My lord, whatever faith is, our church asserts, we are justified by faith alone. But how it can be called a good work, I see not: it is the gift of God; and a gift that presupposes nothing in us, but sin and misery."

B. "How, sir! Then you make God a tyrannical Being, if he justifies some without any goodness in them preceding, and does not justify all. If these are not justified on account of some moral goodness in them, why are not those justified too?"

W. "Because, my lord, they resist his Spirit; because they will not come to him that they may have life; because they suffer him not, to work in them both to will and to do. They cannot be saved, because they will not believe."

B. "Sir, what do you mean by faith?"

W. "My lord; by justifying faith I mean, a conviction wrought in a man by the Holy Ghost, that Christ hath loved *him*, and given himself for *him*, and that through Christ, *his* sins are forgiven."

B. "I believe some good men have this, but not all. But how do you prove this to be the justifying faith taught by our church?"

W. "My lord, from her Homily on Salvation, where she describes it thus; 'A sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favor of God.'"

B. "Why, sir, this is quite another thing."

W. "My lord, I conceive it to be the very same."

B. "Mr. Wesley, I will deal plainly with you. I once thought you, and Mr. Whitefield, well-meaning men; but I cannot think so now. For I have heard more of you: matters of fact, sir. And Mr. Whitefield says in his Journal, 'There are promises still to be fulfilled in me.' Sir, the pretending to extraordinary revelations and gifts of the Holy Ghost, is a horrid thing, a very horrid thing!"

W. "My lord, for what Mr. Whitefield says, Mr. Whitefield, and not I, is accountable. I pretend to no extraordinary revelations, or gifts of the Holy Ghost: none but what every Christian may receive, and ought to expect and pray for. But I do not wonder your lordship has heard facts asserted, which if true, would prove the contrary; nor do I wonder, that your lordship, believing them true, should alter the opinion you once had of me. A quarter of an hour I spent with your lordship before, and about an hour now: and perhaps you have never conversed one other hour with any one who spake in my favor. But how many with those who spake on the other side! so that your lordship could not but think as you do.—But pray, my lord, what are those facts you have heard?"

B. "I hear you administer the sacrament in your societies."

W. "My lord, I never did yet, and I believe never shall."

B. "I hear too, many people fall into fits in your societies, and that you pray over them."

W. "I do so, my lord, when any show by strong cries and tears, that their soul is in deep anguish; I frequently pray to God, to deliver them from it, and our prayer is often heard in that hour."

B. "Very extraordinary indeed! Well, sir, since you ask my advice, I will give it you very freely. You have no business here. You are not commissioned to preach in this diocese. Therefore, I advise you to go hence."

W. "My lord, my business on earth is to do what good I can. Wherever therefore, I think I can do most good, there must I stay, so long as I think so. At present I think I can do most good here; therefore, here I stay.

"As to my preaching here, a dispensation of the gospel is committed to me, and woe is me if I preach not the gospel, wherever I am in the habitable world. Your lordship knows, being ordained a priest, by the commission I then received, I am a priest of the church universal: and being ordained as Fellow of a college, I was not limited to any particular cure, but have an indeterminate commission to preach the word of God, in any part of the Church of England. I do not therefore conceive, that in preaching here by this commission, I break any human law. When I am convinced I do, then it will be time to ask, 'Shall I obey God or man?' But if I should be convinced in the mean while, that I could advance the glory of God, and the salvation of souls in any other place more than in Bristol; in that hour, by God's help, I will go hence; which till then I may not do."

Methodism now began to make a rapid progress: societies were formed, not only in London and Bristol, but in many adjacent places; and some even at a considerable distance. The laborers as yet were few, but believing they were engaged in the cause of God against ignorance and profaneness which overspread the land, they were indefatigable, scarcely giving themselves any rest day or night. The effects of their preaching made much noise, which at length roused some of the sleeping watchmen of Israel; not indeed to inquire after the truth, and amend their ways, but to crush these irregular proceedings, that they might quietly sleep again. These opponents, however, had more zeal against Methodism, than knowledge of it. They attacked it with nothing but idle stories, misrepresentations of facts, and gross falsehoods. They retailed these from the pulpits, and published them from the press, with little regard to *moderation*, *charity*, or even *decency*. This brought more disgrace upon themselves, than on the Methodists; who finding they were assailed only with such kind of weapons, conceived a higher opinion of the cause in which they were engaged, and profited by the attack. A pious and moderate clergyman, perceiving that such attacks could do no good to their cause, published a few rules to direct the assailants in

their future attempts to stop the increasing innovations, in a discourse concerning enthusiasm, or religious delusion. "A minister of our church," says he, "who may look upon it as his duty to warn his parishioners, or an author who may think it necessary to caution his readers, against such preachers, or their doctrine (that is, enthusiastic preachers, such as he took the Methodist preachers to be) ought to be very careful to act with a christian spirit, and to advance nothing but with temper, charity, and truth.—Perhaps the following rules may be proper to be observed by them.

"1. Not to blame persons for doing that now, which Scripture records *holy men* of old to have practised; lest had they lived in those times they should have condemned them also.

"2. Not to censure men in *holy orders*, for teaching the same doctrines which are taught in the Scriptures, and by our church; lest they should ignorantly censure, what they profess to defend.

"3. Not to censure any professed members of our church, who live good lives, for resorting to religious assemblies in private houses, to perform in society acts of divine worship; when the same seems to have been practised by the primitive Christians; and when alas! there are so many parishes, where a person piously disposed, has no opportunity of joining in the public service of our church, more than one hour and half in a week.

"4. Not to condemn those who are constant attendants on the communion and service of our church, if they sometimes use other prayers in private assemblies; since the best divines of our church have composed and published many prayers, that have not the sanction of public authority; which implies a general consent, that our church has not made provision for every private occasion.

"5. Not to establish the power of working miracles, as the great criterion of a divine mission; when Scripture teaches us, that the agreement of doctrines with truth, as taught in those Scriptures, is the only infallible rule.

"6. Not to drive any away from our church, by opprobriously calling them dissenters, or treating them as such, so long as they keep to her communion.

"7. Not lightly to take up with silly stories that may be propagated, to the discredit of persons of a general good character.

"I do not lay down," says he, "these negative rules so much for the sake of any persons whom the unobservance of them would immediately injure, as for our church and her professed defenders. For churchmen, however well-meaning, would lay themselves open to censure, and might do her irretrievable damage, by a behavior contrary to them."

Mr. Wesley often wished that they, who either preached or wrote against him, would seriously attend to these rules; but these rules were too candid and liberal for the common herd of opposers. Some

attacked him with arguments, wretchedly misapplied; others with ridicule, as the more easy method. Among the latter were some even of his own family. His eldest sister Emelia, had always been accustomed to correspond with him, and being some years older than he, and of a strong understanding, had taken great liberty in expressing approbation or disapprobation of any part of his conduct. She wrote to him about this time in very ill temper, abused the Methodists as bad people, and told him she understood he could work miracles, cast out devils, &c. that she had the devil of poverty in her pocket, and should be much obliged if he would cast him out.—Mr. Wesley knew in whom he had believed, and in the midst of abuse poured out upon him by friends and enemies, went on his way as if he heard not.

After a short visit to London he again returned to Bristol. October 15. Upon a pressing invitation he set out for Wales. The churches were here also shut against him, as in England, and he preached in private houses, or in the open air to a willing people.—"I have seen," says he, "no part of England so pleasant for sixty or seventy miles together, as those parts of Wales I have been in: and most of the inhabitants are indeed *ripe for the gospel.* I mean, if the expression seems strange, they are *earnestly desirous* of being instructed in it; and as *utterly ignorant* of it they are, as any Creek or Cherokee Indians. I do not mean, they are ignorant of the name of Christ: many of them can say both the Lord's-prayer, and the Belief. Nay and some, all the catechism: but take them out of the road of what they have learned by rote, and they know no more (nine in ten of those with whom I conversed) either of gospel salvation, or of that faith whereby alone we can be saved, than *Chicali* or *Tomo Chachi.* Now what spirit is he of, who had rather these poor creatures should perish for lack of knowledge, than that they should be saved, even by the exhortations of Howell Harris, or an itinerant preacher. The word did not fall to the ground. Many repented and believed the gospel.—And some joined together, to strengthen each other's hands in God, and to provoke one another to love and to good works."

November 3. Mr. Wesley came to London, where the society was greatly divided, by means of some new notions the Moravian preachers had introduced among them, concerning degrees of faith, and the use of the ordinances, as means of grace. On the 9th, he tells us, "All this week I endeavored by private conversation, to comfort the feeble-minded, and to bring back the lame which had been turned out of the way, that at length they might be healed.—Sunday, November 11. I preached at eight, to five or six thousand, on the spirit of bondage and the spirit of adoption: and at five in the evening to seven or eight thousand, in the place which had been the King's Foundery for cannon. O hasten thou the time, when nation shall not rise up against nation, neither shall they know war any more."—This is the first time I find any mention of the Foundery, and several months

before Mr. Wesley has mentioned it, in his printed Journal. It seems as if he had taken it without consulting the society in Fetter-Lane, the majority of which were now alienated from him; and as a preparatory step to a final separation from the Moravian brethren.

Monday the 12th, he left London, without putting an end to the disputes among the people, over whom the rules of the society gave him no authority, and he had, at present, but little influence. In the evening he came to Wycombe, where there was a little society; to whom he explained the parable of the pharisee and publican. "Here," says he, "we unexpectedly found Mr. Robson and Gambold: with whom, after much prayer and consultation, we agreed, 1. To meet yearly at London, if God permit, on the eve of Ascension-day. 2. To fix then, the business to be done the ensuing year: where, when, and by whom? 3. To meet quarterly there, as many as can; viz. on the second Tuesday in July, October, and January. 4. To send a monthly account to one another, of what God hath done in each of our stations. 5. To inquire whether Mr. Hall, Sympson, Rogers, Ingham, Hutchins, Kinchin, Stonehouse, Cenick, Oxlee, and Brown, will join with us herein. 6. To consider, whether there be any others of our spiritual friends, who are able and willing so to do."—Here we have the first outlines of a plan to unite the ministers together, and to extend their labors to different parts of the kingdom, under such regulations as might give them a mutual dependence on one another. In this sketch, no one assumes an authority over the rest of his brethren: all appear equal. But this plan was never put into execution. When Mr. Wesley separated from the Moravian brethren, Mr. Gambold, and some others, gradually withdrew themselves from him.

November 6. Mr. Samuel Wesley died at Tiverton, and on the 15th, John and Charles Wesley set out on a visit to their sister, in her distress. They came to Tiverton on the 21st, and the Saturday following accepted an invitation to Exeter, where a Mr. D— the next day desired the use of the pulpit in St. Mary's church; which was readily granted both for the morning and afternoon. Mr. John Wesley preached on, "The Kindom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." After sermon, Dr. W— told him, "Sir, you must not preach in the afternoon. Not," said he, "that you preach any false doctrine. I allow, all that you have said is true. And it is the doctrine of the Church of England. But it is not *guarded.* It is dangerous. It may lead people into *enthusiasm*, or *despair*."—How is this! So far as I can understand it, I think it is more inconsistent with reason, than any thing Mr. Wesley ever said in his life. Is it possible, that a knowledge of the truth, especially of the truths of the gospel, and of the doctrines of the Church of England, can have a tendency, without some special *guard,* to lead people into *enthusiasm*, or despair? And is it possible, that one who is set for the defence of the gospel and of the church, can

assert this? *Enthusiasm*, as the word is commonly used, is so vague a term, that I will not inquire what idea the doctor affixed to it; or whether he introduced it merely for the sound? By *despair*, I suppose he meant a state of mind consequent on *repentance* of past transgressions of the law of God. But can the truths of the gospel, or the doctrines of the church, have any moral influence on the minds of men, without producing in the first instance this sort of repentance? Or, do they leave men to *despair*, when brought to repent of their sins? Certainly, he who maintains this, is ignorant of the gospel; and instead of propagating it, or defending the church, is, in flat opposition to both, defending the reign of ignorance and sin over the minds of the people.

Mr. D— having requested a short account of what had been done in Kingswood, and of the building intended for a school; Mr. Wesley, on his return from Exeter, wrote to him as follows:

"Few persons have lived long in the West of England, who have not heard of the Colliers of Kingswood, a people famous from the beginning hitherto, for neither fearing God nor regarding man: so ignorant of the things of God, that they seemed but one remove from beasts that perish; and therefore utterly without the desire of instruction, as well as without the means of it.

"Many last winter used tauntingly to say of Mr. Whitefield, *If he will convert heathens*, why does not he go to the Colliers of Kingswood? In the spring he did so. And as there were thousands who resorted to no place of public worship, he went after them into their own wilderness, to seek and save that which was lost. When he was called away, others went into the highways and hedges, to compel them to come in. And by the grace of God, their labor was not in vain. The scene is already changed. Kingswood does not now, as a year ago, resound with cursing and blasphemy. It is no more filled with drunkenness and uncleanness, and the idle diversions that naturally lead thereto. It is no longer full of wars and fightings, of clamor and bitterness, of wrath and envyings. Peace and love are there. Great numbers of the people are mild, gentle, and easy to be entreated. They do not cry, neither strive, and hardly is their voice heard in the streets, or indeed in their own wood; unless when they are at their usual evening diversion, singing praise unto God their Saviour.

"That their children too might know the things which make for their peace, it was some time since proposed to build a house in Kingswood; and after many foreseen and unforeseen difficulties, in June last, the foundation was laid. The ground made choice of was in the middle of the wood, between the London and Bath roads, not far from that called Two-mile Hill, about three measured miles from Bristol.

"Here a large room was begun for the school, having four small

rooms at either end, for the school-masters (and perhaps, if it should please God, some poor children) to lodge in. Two persons are ready to teach, as soon as the house is ready to receive them, the shell of which is nearly finished; so that it is hoped the whole will be completed in spring, or early in the summer.

"It is true, although the masters require no pay, yet this undertaking is attended with great expense. But let him that feedeth the young ravens see to that. He hath the hearts of all men in his hand. If he put it into your heart, or into that of any of your friends, to assist in bringing this work to perfection, in this world look for no recompense; but it shall be remembered in that day when our Lord shall say, 'Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.'"

Before the Methodists began to preach in Kingswood, the Colliers were a terror to the whole country round. But the change produced by their preaching, was so great and sudden, as to excite universal attention and admiration. And such was the state of religion and morality at this time throughout the nation, that, among a vast majority of the people, a similar change in their tempers and principles of action, was not less necessary to make them Christians, though the necessity of it might be less apparent. And what was done in Kingswood shows what might have been done every where, had the ministers of the gospel been such men as their office required them to be, and applied themselves to the duties of it with the same diligence, that men are obliged to use in following their temporal affairs; which certainly is the least that is required of a minister of the gospel. How will they meet Jesus Christ without shame, confusion, and conscious guilt, who have filled the sacred office of instructing the people in the way of salvation, and have suffered them to *perish for lack of knowledge?* The time will come when such men, of whatever denomination among Christians, will be fully convinced, it had been better for them to have been common porters, than to have occupied the highest pastoral offices in the church of God!

April, 1740. The rioters in Bristol, who had long disturbed the Methodists, being emboldened by impunity, were so increased as to fill, not only the court, but a considerable part of the street. The mayor sent them an order to disperse: but they set him at defiance. At length he sent several of his officers, who took the ringleaders into custody. The next day they were brought into court, it being the time of the quarter-sessions. There they received a severe reprimand, and the Methodists were molested no more.

Disputes still continued in the society at Fetter-Lane. Mr. Wesley had been in London several times without being able to put an end to them: and a great majority of the society were more and more estranged from him. He again came to London in the beginning of June, and labored with them till the 20th of July; when, finding it

was to no purpose, he read a paper, the substance of which was as follows:

"About nine months ago, certain of you began to speak contrary to the doctrine we had till then received. The sum of what you asserted is this: 1. That there is no such thing as *weak faith:* that there is no justifying faith, where there is ever any doubt or fear; or where there is not, in the full sense, a new, a clean heart. 2. That a man ought not to use those *ordinances* of God, which our church terms *means of grace*, before he has such a faith as excludes all doubt and fear, and implies a new, a clean heart. 3. You have often affirmed, that *to search the Scriptures*, *to pray*, or *to communicate*, before we have this faith, is *to seek salvation by works;* and till these works are laid aside, no man can receive faith.

"I believe these assertions to be flatly contrary to the word of God. I have warned you hereof again and again, and besought you to turn back to the law and to the testimony. I have borne with you long, hoping you would turn. But as I find you more and more confirmed in the error of your ways, nothing now remains, but that I should give you up to God. You that are of the same judgment follow me."—"I then," adds Mr. Wesley, "without saying anything more, withdrew, as did eighteen or nineteen of the society."

July 23. "Our little company met at the Foundery, instead of Fetter-Lane. About twenty-five of our brethren God hath given us already, all of whom think and speak the same thing; seven or eight and forty likewise, of the fifty women that were in band, desired to cast in their lot with us."

We here see Mr. Wesley separating himself from the Moravian brethren, by whom he had been instructed in the gospel method of attaining present salvation. The controversy was about the ordinances, as means of grace, &c. He thought the majority in an error, saw they were daily making proselytes, and that the dispute itself was eating out the good which had been done among them. He therefore thought it no schism, or breach of charity to depart from them, and divide the society, as a means of preserving the rest.—But Mr. Wesley did not charge the whole body of the Moravians, with the notions above mentioned, but Molther in particular, who had occasioned the disputes. Peter Bohler, however, many years after, in a private letter, denied that Molther ever held the opinions Mr. Wesley attributed to him, and insisted that he must either have misunderstood, or misrepresented him. But it is not probable that Mr. Wesley either misunderstood or misrepresented him, as Mr. Charles Wesley mentions the same things in his private Journal. It is more likely that Molther was convinced of his error before he returned to Germany.

Mr. Wesley still retained a love for the brethren, which he expressed in an address to the Moravian church, prefixed to the Jour-

nal, in which the difference mentioned above is detailed at length. In this address he tells them, "What unites my heart to you is, the excellency, in many respects, of the doctrine taught among you: your laying the true foundation, 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself:' your declaring the free grace of God, the cause, and faith the condition of justification: your bearing witness to those great fruits of faith, 'righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;' and that sure mark thereof, 'He that is born of God doth not commit sin.'

"I magnify the grace of God which is in many among you, enabling you to love him who hath first loved us; teaching you, in whatsoever state you are, therewith to be content: causing you to trample under foot the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life: and above all, giving you to love one another, in a manner the world knoweth not of.

"I love and esteem you for your excellent discipline, scarce inferior to that of the apostolic age: for your due subordination of officers, every one knowing and keeping his proper rank; for the exact division of the people under your charge, so that each may be fed with food convenient for them; for your care that all who are employed in the service of the church, should frequently and freely confer together; and, in consequence thereof, your exact and seasonable knowledge of the state of every member, and your ready distribution either of spiritual or temporal relief, as every man hath need."

Hitherto Mr. Whitefield had labored in union and harmony with Mr. Wesley, and his brother. They preached in the same pulpits, and had only one common design, to promote Christian knowledge, and a holy conversation among the people, without entering into the discussion of particular opinions. But about this time Mr. Wesley printed a sermon against the Calvinistic notion of predestination, and sent a copy to Commissary Garden, at Charlestown, where Mr. Whitefield met with it. He had already embraced that opinion; and though the subject was treated in that sermon, in a general way, without naming or pointing at any individual, yet he found himself hurt, that Mr. Wesley should bring forward the controversy, and publicly oppose an opinion which he believed to be agreeable to the word of God. On his passage to England, he wrote to Mr. Charles Wesley, February 1, 1741, expostulating with him and his brother on the subject. He says, "My dear, dear brethren, why did you throw out the bone of contention? Why did you print that sermon against predestination? Why did you in particular, my dear brother Charles, affix your hymn, and join in putting out your late hymn-book? How can you say, you will not dispute with me about election, and yet print such hymns, and your brother send his sermon over against election, to Mr. Garden, and others in America? —Do not you think, my dear brethren, I must be as much concerned

for truth, or what I think truth, as you? God is my judge, I always was, and hope I always shall be desirous that you may be preferred before me. But I must preach the gospel of Christ, and that I cannot *now* do, without speaking of election."—He then tells Mr. Charles, that in Christmas-week he had written an answer to his brother's sermon, "Which," says he, "is now printing at Charlestown; another copy I have sent to Boston, and another I now bring with me, to print in London. If it occasion a strangeness between us, it shall not be my fault. There is nothing in my answer exciting to it, that I know of. O my dear brethren, my heart almost bleeds within me! Methinks I could be willing to tarry here on the waters forever, rather than come to England to oppose you."

Controversy between good men is commonly on some speculative opinion, while they are perfectly at unison on the essential *points* of religion, and the duties of morality. And the controversy almost always injures the Christian temper, much more than it promotes the interests of speculative truth. On this occasion a separation took place between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield, so far as to have different places of worship: and some warm and tart expressions dropped from each. But their good opinion of each other's integrity and usefulness, founded on long and intimate acquaintance, could not be injured by such a difference of sentiment; and their mutual affection was only obscured by a cloud, for a season.

Mr. Whitefield was the first who visited the Colliers of Kingswood, and formed the design of building the school there; and began to make collections for the purpose. But his calls to America, would not permit him to prosecute the design, which he therefore transferred to Mr. Wesley. Being now less friendly than before, he was more disposed to find fault with little things, and to misconstrue the bare appearances of others. He wrote a list of things he thought improperly managed. In April Mr. Wesley returned him a long answer, part of which is as follows:

"Would you have me deal plainly with you, my brother? I believe you would: then by the grace of God I will.

"Of many things I find you are not rightly informed: of others you speak what you have not well weighed.

"The society-room at Bristol, you say is adorned. How? Why with a piece of green cloth nailed to the desk; two sconces for eight candles each in the middle; and—nay I know no more. Now which of these can be spared, I know not; nor would I desire either more adorning or less.

"But lodgings are made for me or my brother. That is, in plain English, there is a little room by the school, where I speak to the persons who come to me; and a garret, in which a bed is placed for me. And do you grudge me this? Is this the voice of my brother, my son Whitefield!

"You say further, that the children at Bristol, are clothed as well as taught. I am sorry for it; for the cloth is not paid for yet, and was bought without my consent or knowledge.

"But those of Kingswood have been neglected. This is not so, notwithstanding the heavy debt which lay upon it. One master and one mistress have been in the house, ever since it was capable of receiving them. A second master has been placed there some months since: and I have long been seeking for two proper mistresses; so that as much has been done, as matters stand, if not more, than I can answer to God or man.

"Hitherto then, there is no ground for the heavy charge of perverting your design for the poor colliers. Two years since your design was to build them a school, that their children also might be taught to fear the Lord. To this end you collected some money, more than once: how much I cannot say, till I have my papers. But this I know; it was not near one-half of what has been expended on the work. This design you then recommended to me, and I pursued it with all my might, through such a train of difficulties as, I will be bold to say, you have not yet met with in your life. For many months I collected money wherever I was—and began building, though I had not then a quarter of the money requisite to finish. However, taking all the debt upon myself, the creditors were willing to stay: and then it was that I took possession of it in my own name; that is when the foundation was laid; and I immediately made my will, fixing my brother and you to succeed me therein.

"But it is a poor case, that you and I should be talking thus. Indeed these things ought not to be. It lay in your power to have prevented all, and yet to have borne testimony to what you call the truth. If you had disliked my sermon, you might have printed another on the same text, and have answered my proofs, without mentioning my name: this had been fair and friendly.

"You rank all the maintainers of *universal redemption*, with Socinians themselves. Alas, my brother, do you not know even this, that the Socinians allow no redemption at all? That Socinus himself speaks thus, *Tota redemptio nostra per Christum, metaphora?* And says expressly, 'Christ did not die as a ransom for any, but only as an example for all mankind!' How easy were it for me to hit many other palpable blots, in that which you call an answer to my sermon? And how above measure contemptible would you then appear to all impartial men, either of sense or learning? But I spare you, mine hand shall not be upon you; the Lord be judge between me and thee! The general tenor both of my public and private exhortations, when I touch thereon at all, as even my enemies know if they would testify, is, spare the young man, even Absalom, for my sake."

Perhaps Mr. Wesley, in consequence of his age and learning, assumed in this letter, a greater superiority over Mr. Whitefield, than

was prudent or becoming. It was not possible, however, that the dust of controversy could long smother the ardent affection which each had for the other. In the latter end of the following year, Mr. Whitefield wrote to him as follows: "I long to hear from you, and write this hoping to have an answer. I rejoice to hear the Lord blesses your labors.—May you be blessed in bringing souls to Christ, more and more. I believe we shall go on best when we only preach the simple gospel, and do not interfere with each other's plan.—Our Lord exceedingly blesses us at the Tabernacle.—I doubt not but he deals in the same bountiful manner with you. I was at your letter-day on Monday. Brother Charles has been pleased to come and see me twice. Behold what a happy thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! That the whole christian world may all become of one heart and one mind; and that we in particular, though differing in judgment, may be examples of mutual, fervent, undissembled affection, is the hearty prayer of, Rev. and dear sir, your most affectionate, though most unworthy younger brother in the kingdom and patience of Jesus."

I have not found Mr. Wesley's answer to this letter; but it appears from one Mr. Whitefield wrote to him about a fortnight after, that he had answered it, in the same spirit of peace and brotherly love. "I thank you," says Mr. Whitefield, "for your kind answer to my last. Had it come a few hours sooner I should have read some part of it amongst our other letters. Dear sir, who would be troubled with a party spirit? May our Lord make all his children free from it indeed!"

From this time, their mutual regard and friendly intercourse suffered no interruption till Mr. Whitefield's death; who says, in his last Will, written with his own hand about six months before he died, "I leave a mourning-ring to my honored and dear friends, and disinterested fellow-laborers, the Rev. Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, in token of my indissoluble union with them, in heart and christian affection, notwithstanding our difference in judgment about some particular points of doctrine."* When the news of Mr. Whitefield's death reached London, Mr. Keen, one of his executors, recollecting he had often said to him, "If you should die abroad whom shall we get to preach your funeral sermon? Must it be your old friend, the Rev. Mr. John Wesley?" And having constantly received for answer, "He is the man;" Mr. Keen accordingly waited on Mr. Wesley, and engaged him to preach it; which he did, and bore ample testimony to the undissembled piety, the ardent zeal, and the extensive usefulness of his much loved and honored friend.†

After Mr. Wesley had separated from the Moravians, Mr. Gambold and some others left him, and became more closely united to the *brethren:* and even his brother Charles was at this time wavering. On this occasion Mr. Wesley sent him the following letter, dated

* See Robert's Life of Whitefield, page 256.

† Ibid. page 230. Mr. Whitefield died in September, 1770.

London, April 21. "I am settling," says he, "the regular method of visiting the sick here; eight or ten have offered themselves for the work; who are likely to have full employment; for more and more are taken ill every day. Our Lord will thoroughly purge his floor.

"I rejoice in your speaking your mind freely. O let our love be without dissimulation. I am not clear, that brother Maxfield should not expound at Greyhound-lane; nor can I as yet do without him. Our clergymen have increased full as much as the laymen; and that the Moravians are other than laymen, I know not.

"As yet I dare in no wise join with the Moravians: 1. Because their whole scheme is *mystical*, not *scriptural*, refined in every point above what is written, immeasurably beyond the plain doctrines of the gospel. 2. Because there is darkness and closeness in all their behavior, and guile in almost all their words. 3. Because they not only do not practise, but utterly despise and deny self-denial and the daily cross. 4. Because they, upon principle, conform to the world, in wearing gold or costly apparel. 5. Because they extend christian liberty in this and many other respects, beyond what is warranted by holy writ. 6. Because they are by no means zealous of good works; or at least, only to their own people. And lastly, because they make inward religion swallow up outward in general. For these reasons chiefly I will rather, God being my helper, stand quite alone than join with them. I mean, till I have full assurance that they will spread none of these errors among the little flock committed to my charge.

"O! my brother, my soul is grieved for you: the poison is in you: fair words have stolen away your heart.—No English man or woman, is like the Moravians! So the matter is come to a fair issue. Five of us did still stand together a few months since: but two are gone to the right hand (Hutchins and Cennick) and two more to the left (Mr. Hall, and you;) Lord, if it be thy gospel which I preach, arise and maintain thine own cause!"

Mr. Maxfield was a layman, and hence we see laymen were already employed by Mr. Wesley in the work. He was remarkably useful, and excited the astonishment of those who heard him. The late Countess Dowager of Huntingdon, was at this time, and for many years after, exceedingly attached to Mr. Wesley, and very frequently wrote to him. She heard Mr. Maxfield expound and in a letter to Mr. Wesley speaks thus of him. "I never mentioned to you, that I have seen Maxfield. He is one of the greatest instances of God's peculiar favor, that I know. He has raised from the stones, one to sit among the princes of his people. He is my astonishment. How is God's power shown in weakness. You can have no idea, what an attachment I have to him. He is highly favored of the Lord. The first time I made him expound, expecting little from him, I sat over against him, and thought, what a power of God must be with him, to make me give any attention to him. But before he had gone over one fifth

part, any one that had seen me would have thought I had been made of wood or stone, so quite immovable I both felt and looked. His power in prayer is very extraordinary.—To deal plainly, I could either talk or write for an hour about him.—The society goes on well here.—Live assured of the most faithful and sincere friendship of your unworthy sister in Christ Jesus."

From this time the number of laymen employed, gradually increased, in proportion to the increase of the societies and the want of preachers; the clergy generally standing at a distance from a plan of such irregularity, and so much labor. The objections that have been made against employing lay-preachers, and what may be fairly said in their defence, will be considered in another part of this work.

In June, Mr. Wesley took a journey as far as Nottingham, where he preached, at the market-place, to an immense multitude of people.—He set out for London, and read over in the way Luther's Comment on the Epistle to the Galatians. He passes a most severe sentence on Luther, for decrying Reason, right or wrong, as an enemy to the gospel of Christ; and for speaking *blasphemously* of good works, and the law of God. The severity of this sentence perhaps arose from a misconception of the scope and design of Luther's words. That Luther sometimes spake incautiously, and even rashly, we may readily admit, and that his words, on such occasions may be easily understood in a sense he did not intend; which was probably the case in the passages to which Mr. Wesley refers. But some allowance is to be made for Luther's* situation, the errors he had to oppose, and the

* Martin Luther, the celebrated German reformer, was born in Saxony, in 1483. He studied at Erford, being designed for a civilian. But an awful catastrophe made such an impression on his mind, that he resolved to retire from the world. As he was walking in the fields with a fellow student, they were struck by lightning, Luther to the ground, and his companion dead by his side. He then entered into the order of Augustine hermits at Erford. From this place he removed to Wirtemburg, being appointed by the Elector of Saxony, professor of Theology and Philosophy in the university just founded there by that prince. In 1512, he was sent to Rome, to plead the cause of some convents of his order, who had quarrelled with their vicar-general: this gave him an opportunity of observing the corruptions of the pontifical court, and the debauched lives of the dignitaries of the church; and probably gave him the first disgust of the Romish ecclesiastical government; especially as he had engaged in the monastic life from motives of genuine piety. Upon his return to Wirtemburg, it was remarked that he grew unusually pensive, and more austere in his life and conversation. he likewise read and expounded the sacred writings in lectures and sermons; and threw new lights on obscure passages. The minds of his auditors being thus prepared, a favorable occasion soon offered for carrying into execution his grand plan of reform. In 1517, Pope Leo X. published his indulgencies. Albert, archbishop of Mentz, and Magdeburgh, was commissioner for Germany, and was to have half the sum raised in that country: Tetzel, a Dominican friar, was deputed to collect, with others of his order, for Saxony; and he carried his zeal so far, as to declare his commission was so extensive, that by purchasing indulgencies, not only all past sins, but those intended in future, were to be forgiven. Luther beheld his success with great concern, and began to preach openly against such vile practices. And thus began the Reformation in Germany, which Luther carried on with astonishing success, through a train of difficulties and dangers, that, to human reason appeared insuperable. He died in 1546, aged 63. Luther's friends and adherents were first called Protestants, in

provocations he received. He must be more than human, who can walk steadily in the middle path of moderation, while a host of enemies are pushing and goading him on every side.

June 18. Being at Oxford, Mr. Wesley inquired concerning the exercises previous to the degree of *Batchelor in Divinity*. And though he certainly was well qualified to pass through the various gradations of academical honors, yet he laid aside the thought of proceeding further in them.—Having visited London, he was again at Oxford in the beginning of July; and on the sixth being in the college-library, "I took down," says he, "by mistake, the works of *Episcopius*;* which, opening on an account of the Synod of Dort, I believed it might be useful to read it through. But what a scene is here disclosed! What a pity it is that the *holy* Synod of Trent, and that of Dort, did not sit at the same time! Nearly allied as they were, not only as to the *purity of doctrine*, which each of them established, but also as to the *spirit* wherewith they acted! If the latter did not exceed."

July 15. Mr. Wesley reached Bristol, and tells us he came just in

1529, at a Diet held at Spires, in which several Princes of the Empire, and some Imperial cities *protested* against the attempts of the Romanists to obtain a decree, that no change should be made in their religion. The Calvinists have commonly been called the Reformed churches.

* Simon Episcopius, was born at Amsterdam, in 1583. He was one of the most learned men of the 17th century, and chief supporter of the Arminian doctrine. In 1612, he was chosen divinity professor at Leyden, in the midst of the Arminian controversy; which, though it had begun in the Universities, soon flew to the pulpits, from whence it spread and inflamed the people. In 1610, the year after Arminius died, his friends, who had espoused his doctrine, presented a Remonstrance to the States of Holland, against the violent proceedings of the Calvinists to injure or suppress them. And from this circumstance, they have since been called in Holland, Remonstrants. In 1617, the King of Great Britain exhorted the States General of the United Provinces to call a Synod to put an end to their differences. This advice was seconded by several of the States; and accordingly a Synod was appointed to be held the next year at Dort. The States of Holland having invited Episcopius to take his place in it, he went thither accompanied by some Remonstrant ministers; but the Synod would not allow them to sit as judges, nor to appear in any other capacity than as persons accused, and summoned before them. The Remonstrants were condemned, deposed from their functions, and banished their country! But the times growing more favorable, Episcopius returned to Holland, and at length was chosen Rector of the college founded by the Arminians, at Amsterdam; where he died in 1643.

Some of the foreign divines present at the Synod, afterwards complained, that the Remonstrants had been wronged; that they had been imposed upon, by the Moderator and his cabal, who formed a Synod among themselves, and concerted in *private* those things they had a mind to bring to a good issue.——It is evident that the Dutch divines were parties concerned, and judges on the trial. What justice or candor could their opponents expect? Synods, Assemblies, or Conferences, call them what you please, that are conducted on such principles as these, are hateful to God, and odious to candid and good men, who fully understand their proceedings.—What is the cause, that men of most denominations, who have been set apart to instruct others in our most holy religion, which teaches us humility, the love of God and man, and a forgiving spirit, should be so much alike, and so much *worse* than other people, when they have the power of persecuting and distressing those who oppose them, or differ from them in opinion? How highly ought we to esteem the true ministers of Christ, who shew a more Christian temper!

season; "For," says he, "a spirit of enthusiasm was breaking in upon many, who charged their own *imaginations* on the *will of God*, and that, not *written*, but *impressed on their hearts*. If these *impressions* be received as the rule of action, instead of the *written word*, I know nothing so wicked or absurd, but we may fall into, and that without remedy."—We have here full and satisfactory evidence, that Mr. Wesley paid no regard to impressions or inward feelings, if they did not accord with the written word, by which alone we must judge of them. His belief on this subject was plainly this; 1. Without experience of present salvation from our sins, the gospel has no saving influence on our hearts: 2. Such experience can have no existence without inward feeling, that is a consciousness of it: 3. That we must judge of the reality of our experience by the word of God, to which it will answer as face answers to face in a glass, if it be of God; otherwise it is mere imagination, a creature of our own that will deceive us.

The following queries concerning the Methodists were sent, I apprehend, from Holland or Germany to some person in England. The answer to each is in Mr. Wesley's hand-writing; and the date prefixed is 1741. But if this be the true date, I conjecture, from the answer to the fourth and fifth query, that it must have been very early in this year, before Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield separated on the doctrine of predestination. However, not being able to ascertain the date exactly, I have referred them to this place.

Quest. 1. Whether the number of the Methodists is considerable, among the students and learned men?

Answ. "The number of the Methodists is not considerable, among the students and learned men."

2. Whether at Oxford, where the Methodists first sprung up, there be still many of them among the scholars?

"There are very few of them now left, among the scholars at Oxford."

3. Whether they are all of one mind, and whether they have the same principles? Especially, 4. Whether those Methodists that are still at Oxford, approve of the sentiments and actions of Mr. Whitefield and Messrs. Wesleys?

"They are all of the same principles with the Church of England. as laid down in her Articles and Homilies: and, 4. Do accordingly approve of the sentiments of Mr. Whitefield, and Mr. Wesley, and of their publishing them elsewhere, since they have been shut out of the churches."

5. How they came to revive those doctrines, hitherto neglected by the clergy of the Church of England, of predestination, the new birth, and justification by faith alone? And 6. Whether they have the same from the Moravian brethren?

"Predestination is not a doctrine taught by the Methodists. But

they do teach that men must be born again, and that we are saved through faith: and 6. "The latter of these they learned from some of the Moravian brethren; the former by reading the New Testament."

7. Whether they be orthodox* in other doctrinal points; and whether they lead an unblameable Christian life;

"They openly challenge all that hear them to answer those questions, 'Which of you convinceth me of sin?' Or, of teaching any doctrine contrary to the scripture? And the general accusation against them is, that they are righteous overmuch."

8. Whether they strictly regulate themselves according to the rule and discipline of the Moravian brethren; except that they still keep and observe the outward worship according to the Church of England?

"They do not regulate themselves according to the discipline of the Moravians but of the English Church."

9. Whether they do any real good among the common people?

"Very many of the common people among whom they preach, were profane swearers, and now fear an oath; were gluttons, or drunkards, and are now temperate; were whoremongers, and are now chaste; were servants of the devil, and are now servants of God."

10. Why the bishops do not effectually inhibit them, and hinder their field and street preaching?

"The bishops do not inhibit their field and street preaching; 1. Because there is no law in England against it: 2. Because God does not yet suffer them to do it without law."

11. Whether the Archbishop of Canterbury is satisfied with them; as we are told?

"The Archbishop of Canterbury is not satisfied with them; especially since Mr. Molther, in the name of the Moravian Church, told his Grace their disapprobation of them; and in particular of their field preaching."

12. Whether their private assemblies or societies are orderly and edifying?

"Their private assemblies, and societies are orderly, and many say they find them edifying."

13. What opinion the Presbyterians, and particularly Dr. Watts, has of them?

"Most of the Presbyterians, and most all other denominations, are of opinion, much religion hath made them mad."

14. Whether there are any Methodists among the episcopal clergy of the Church of England?

"Mr. Whitefield, Hutchins, Robson, and the two Messrs. Wesleys, and several others, are priests of the Episcopal Church of England."

* Some persons have thought this word very equivocal, and difficult to be explained. A late celebrated public speaker among the Friends, once told his audience at Warrington, that he knew not how to explain the word orthodox, except by another little word of three syllables, *uppermost!* In this sense the Methodists have never yet been orthodox; and it is generally supposed there are but few among them who earnestly desire to be so.

The modesty and openness with which Mr. Wesley answered the queries, is striking and pleasing. His mind seems to have been wholly free from any desire to exaggerate or magnify the things of which he spake.

The laborers as yet being few, Mr. Wesley staid but a short time in any one place, being almost continually travelling between London, Bristol, and Wales; the last of which he visited twice in the autumn. In London, they had long been disturbed in their places of worship by a riotous mob; but on the last day of this year, Sir John Ganson called upon him, and said, "Sir, you have no need to suffer these riotous mobs to molest you, as they have done long. I, and all the other Middlesex magistrates have orders from above, to do you justice whenever you apply to us." Two or three weeks after they did apply. Justice was done, though not with rigor: and from that time the Methodists had peace in London.

Feb. 15, 1742. Many met together at Bristol, to consult with Mr. Wesley concerning a proper method of paying the public debt, contracted by building. Nearly three years before this period, a house had been built here, called the New Room; and notwithstanding the subscriptions and public collections made at the time to defray the expense, a large debt remained upon it. And it was now agreed, 1. That every member of the society who was able, should contribute a penny a week. 2. That the whole society should be divided into little companies or *classes*, about twelve in each class: and, 3. That one person in each class, should receive the contribution of the rest, and bring it to the stewards weekly. In March, the same thing was done in London, though for a different purpose. "I appointed," says Mr. Wesley, "several earnest and sensible men to meet me, to whom I showed the great difficulty I had long found, of knowing the people who desired to be under my care. After much discourse, they all agreed, there could be no better way to come to a sure, thorough knowledge of each person, than to divide them into classes like those at Bristol, under the inspection of those in whom I could most confide. This was the origin of our classes in London, for which I can never sufficiently praise God: the unspeakable usefulness of the institution, having ever since been more and more manifest."

The person appointed to visit and watch over these little companies, or classes, was called the *leader* of that class to which he received his appointment. Mr. Wesley called the leaders together, and desired that each would make a particular inquiry into the behavior of those he saw weekly. They did so; and many disorderly walkers were detected. Some were turned from the evil of their ways, and some put away from the society. The rest saw it with fear, and rejoiced unto God with reverence.—At first the leaders visited each person at his own house: but this was soon found inexpedient. It required

more time than the leaders had to spare; many persons lived with masters, mistresses, or relations, where they could not be so visited; and where misunderstandings had arisen between persons in the same class, it was more convenient to see them face to face. On these, and some other considerations, it was agreed that each leader should meet his class all together, once a week, at a time and place most convenient for the whole. He began and ended the meeting with singing and prayer; and spent about an hour in conversing with those present, one by one. By this means, a more full inquiry was made into the behavior of every person; advice or reproof was given as need required; misunderstandings were removed, and brotherly-love promoted. "It can scarce be conceived," says Mr. Wesley, "what advantages have been reaped from this little prudential regulation. Many now experienced that christian fellowship, of which they had not so much as an idea before. They began to bear one another's burdens, and naturally to care for each other's welfare. And as they had daily a more intimate acquaintance with, so they had a more endeared affection for each other." Mr. Wesley further adds, "Upon reflection, I could not but observe, this is the very thing which was from the beginning of Christianity. In the earliest times, those whom God had sent forth, preached the gospel to every creature. And the οἱ ἀκροαταὶ, the body of hearers, were mostly either Jews or Heathens. But as soon as any of these were so convinced of the truth, as to forsake sin, and seek the gospel of salvation, they immediately joined them together, took an account of their names, advised them to watch over each other, and met these κατηχουμενοι, *catechumens*, as they were then called, apart from the great congregation, that they might instruct, rebuke, exhort, and pray with them, and for them, according to their several necessities."

As the people increased, and societies were multiplied, Mr. Wesley found it necessary to add some further regulations, to ascertain who belonged to the society, and to prevent improper persons from imposing upon him. To every person therefore, of whose seriousness, and good conversation he had no doubt, he gave a *ticket*, on which was printed a short portion of Scripture, and on which he wrote the date and the person's name. He who received a ticket was by that made a member of the society, and immediately appointed to meet in some one of the classes; and this method of admitting members was adopted throughout the whole Methodist connection. These tickets, therefore, or *Tesseræ*, as the ancients called them, being of the same force with the επιστολαὶ συστατικαὶ, commendatory letters, mentioned by the Apostle, introduced those who bore them, into the fellowship one with another, not only in one place, but in every place where any might happen to come. As they were common to all the members of the societies every where, so a stranger in any place, who held one, was immediately received as a brother, and admitted to their private

assemblies. But lest any improper person should be suffered to continue in the society, and bring disgrace on the whole body by bad conduct, it was agreed that these tickets should have no force for a longer time than three months. Mr. Wesley determined, that, where he could stay a few days, he would speak with every member of the society once a quarter, and change the tickets; and that the preachers appointed to act as his assistants, should every where do the same. By this means the tickets were changed four times in a year; and this was called *visiting the classes.* Mr. Wesley observes, "By these (tickets) it was easily distinguished, when the society were to meet apart, who were members of it, and who not. These also supplied us with a quiet and inoffensive method of removing any disorderly member, he has no new ticket at the next quarterly visitation, and hereby it is immediately known, that he is no longer of the community."

April 9. They had the first watch-night in London. "We commonly choose," says Mr. Wesley, "for this solemn service, the Friday night nearest the full moon, either before or after, that those of the congregation who live at a distance may have light to their several homes. The service begins at half an hour past eight, and continues till a little after midnight. We have often found a peculiar blessing at these seasons. There is generally a deep awe upon the congregation, perhaps in some measure owing to the silence of the night: particularly in singing the hymn, with which we commonly conclude:

"Hearken to the solemn voice!
The awful midnight cry,
Waiting souls rejoice, rejoice,
And feel the Bridegroom nigh."

Having received a letter pressing him to go without delay into Leicestershire, he set out. "The next afternoon," says Mr. Wesley, "I stopt a little at Newport-Pagnell, and then rode on till I overtook a serious man, with whom I immediately fell into conversation. He presently gave me to know what his opinions were: therefore I said nothing to contradict them. But that did not content him: he was quite uneasy to know 'Whether I held the doctrine of the decrees, as he did.' But I told him over and over, we had better keep to practical things, lest we should be angry at one another. And so we did for two miles, till he caught me unawares, and dragged me into the dispute before I knew where I was. He then grew warmer and warmer: told me, I was rotten at heart, and supposed I was one of John Wesley's followers. I told him, no, I am John Wesley himself. Upon which he appeared,

'*Improvisum aspris veluti qui sentibus anguem*
Pressit.'"

As one who had unawares trodden on a snake: "and would gladly

have run away outright. But being the better mounted of the two, I kept close to his side, and endeavored to show him his heart, till we came into the street of Northampton."

Mr. Wesley had now a call to extend his labors further north than he had hitherto done. John Nelson, a mason of Birstal, in Yorkshire, had been in London some time, and heard the gospel at the Foundery. His understanding was informed, his conscience awakened, and feeling the whole energy of the truths he heard delivered, he received that peace, which the Apostle speaks of, as the fruit of justifying faith. He received 'the knowledge of salvation by the remission of his sins.' He had full employment and large wages in London, but he found a constant inclination to return to his native place. He did so; and his relations and acquaintance soon began to inquire what he thought of this new faith, which, by means of Mr. Ingham, had occasioned much noise and talk in Yorkshire. John told them point blank, this new faith, as they called it, was the old faith of the gospel: and related to them his own experience. This was soon noised abroad; and more and more came to inquire concerning these strange things. Some put him upon the proof of the great truths such inquiries naturally led him to mention. And thus he was brought unawares to quote, explain, compare, and enforce several parts of Scripture. This he did at first, sitting in his house, till the company increased so that the house could not contain them. Then he stood at the door, which he was commonly obliged to do, in the evening, as soon as he came from work. His word was soon made a blessing to the people: many believed his report, and were turned from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and satan unto the living God. Mr. Ingham hearing of this came to Birstal, inquired into the facts, talked with John himself in the closest manner, both touching his knowledge and experience. The result was, he encouraged him to proceed, and invited him to come, as often as convenient, to any of those places where he himself had been, and speak to the people as God should enable him. Things being in this state, John Nelson invited Mr. Wesley to come down amongst them; and May 26, he arrived at Birstal. Here he found a lay-preacher who undeniably, had done much good. Many of the greatest profligates in all the country were now changed. Their blasphemies were turned to praise. The whole town wore a new face: such a change did God work by the artless testimony of one plain man! Mr. Wesley was so fully convinced of the great design of a preached gospel, that if sinners were truly converted to God, and a decent order preserved in hearing the word, he thought it a matter of less consequence, whether the instrument of the good done, was a layman, or regularly ordained. And if a regularly ordained preacher did no good, and a layman by preaching did; it was easy to judge which was acting most agreeably to the design of the gospel, and most for the benefit of society.

It is probable that such reflections as these had arisen in his mind on the fact before him: and his judgment was confirmed by repeated facts of the same kind which occurred. And thus he was induced to make use of the labors of laymen, on a more extensive scale than had hitherto been allowed.

After preaching at Birstal, he went forward to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Having witnessed the success of the gospel among the colliers at Kingswood, he had long had a desire to visit those about Newcastle, and now accomplished his wish; at least in part, and made way for future visits. He was not known to any person in Newcastle; and therefore he, and John Taylor, who travelled with him, put up at an inn. On walking through the town, after taking some refreshment, he observes, "I was surprised: so much drunkenness, cursing and swearing, even from the mouths of little children, do I never remember to have seen and heard before in so short a time. Sunday, May 30. At seven in the morning, he walked down to Sandgate, the poorest and most contemptible part of the town, and standing at the end of the street with John Taylor, began to sing the hundredth psalm. "Three or four people," says he, "came out to see what was the matter, who soon increased to four or five hundred. I suppose there might be twelve or fifteen hundred before I had done preaching: to whom I applied those solemn words, 'He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed.'

"Observing the people when I had done, to stand gaping and staring upon me with the most profound astonishment, I told them, if you desire to know who I am, my name is John Wesley. At five in the evening, with God's help, I design to preach here again. At five, the hill on which I designed to preach, was covered from top to bottom. I never saw so large a number of people together, either in Moorfields, or at Kennington-common. I knew it was not possible for the one half to hear, although my voice was then strong and clear; and I stood so as to have them all in view, as they were ranged on the side of the hill. The word of God which I set before them was, 'I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely.' After preaching, the poor people were ready to tread me under foot, out of pure love and kindness. I was sometime before I could possibly get out of the press. I then went back another way than I came. But several were got to our inn before me: by whom I was vehemently importuned to stay with them, at least a few days: or however, one day more. But I could not consent; having given my word to be at Birstal, with God's leave, on Tuesday night."

Monday, 31. Mr. Wesley left Newcastle, and preached at various places as he returned through Yorkshire. June 5. He rode for Epworth, in Lincolnshire, the place of his nativity. "It being many years," says he, "since I had been in Epworth before, I went to an

inn, in the middle of the town, not knowing whether there were any left in it now, who would not be ashamed of my acquaintance. But an old servant of my father, with two or three poor women, presently found me out. I asked her, 'Do you know any in Epworth who are in earnest to be saved?' She answered, 'I am by the grace of God; and I know I am saved through faith.' I asked, 'have you then peace with God? Do you know that he has forgiven your sins?' She replied, 'I thank God, I know it well, and many here can say the same thing.'"

Sunday, 6. A little before the service began, he offered his assistance to Mr. Romley, the curate, either by preaching or reading prayers. But this was not accepted. In the afternoon, the church was exceedingly full, a report being spread, that Mr. Wesley was to preach. After sermon, John Taylor stood in the church-yard, and gave notice, as the people came out, that Mr. Wesley, not being permitted to preach in the church, designed to preach there at six o'clock. "Accordingly at six," says he, "I came, and found such a congregation as, I believe, Epworth never saw before. I stood near the east end of the church, upon my father's tombstone, and cried, 'The kingdom of heaven is not meats and drinks; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.'"

On the 9th, he tells us, "I rode over to a neighboring town, to wait upon a justice of peace, a man of candor and understanding; before whom, I was informed, their angry neighbors had carried a whole waggon-load of these new *heretics*. But when he asked 'what they had done?' There was a deep silence; for that was a point their conductors had forgot. At length one said, 'Why they pretend to be better than other people: and besides they pray from morning to night.' Mr. S. asked, 'But have they done nothing besides?' 'Yes, sir,' said an old man: 'an't please your worship, they have *converted* my wife. Till she went among them, she had such a tongue! And now she is as quiet as a lamb.' 'Carry them back, carry them back,' replied the justice, 'and let them convert all the scolds in the town.'"

On the 13th, Mr. Wesley preached for the last time at Epworth, during his present visit, and from thence went to Sheffield. Here he staid and preached a few days, and then went on to Donnington Park, and found Miss Cowper, whom he had called to see in his way to Yorkshire, was gone to rest. Here he conversed with Mr. Simpson, who had gone among the *brethren*. "And of this I am fully persuaded," says Mr. Wesley, "that whatever he does, is in the uprightness of his heart. But he is led into a thousand mistakes by one wrong principle; the making *inward impressions* his rule of action, and not the *written word:* which many ignorantly or wickedly ascribe to the body of the people called Methodists." Here we may observe, as in an instance before mentioned, Mr. Wesley wholly con-

demns the principle of making *inward impressions* the rule of conduct, independent of, or separate from, the written word of God.

Mr. Wesley left Donnington Park, and preaching at various places in the way, on the 28th, came to Bristol. From hence he visited Wales, and afterwards divided his labors chiefly between London and Bristol, and some adjacent societies, till the beginning of November, when he set out for the North. On the 13th, he came to Newcastle. Here his brother Charles had been preaching some weeks before, with great success, and a society was already formed. The next morning Mr. Wesley began to preach at five o'clock, a thing unheard of in these parts, till he introduced the practice: which he did every where, if there was any probability that a few persons could be gathered to hear him. On the 18th, he says, "I could not but observe, the different manner wherein God is pleased to work in different places. The grace of God flows here, with a wider stream than it did at first either at Bristol or Kingswood. But it does not sink so deep as it did there. Few are thoroughly convinced of sin, and scarce any can witness that the Lamb of God has taken away their sins." I fear this judgment of the state of the people, was not founded on the most satisfactory evidence. His brother had been here, who did not encourage *agitations:* and he had hitherto seen less of them under his preaching, than he had been accustomed to see in other places. But however this may be, for I do not determine, he formed a different opinion some days after. "I never saw," says he, "a work of God in any other place, so evenly and gradually carried on. It continually rises step by step. Not so much seems to be done at any one time, as hath frequently been done at Bristol or London: but something at every time. It is the same with particular souls. I saw none in the triumph of faith, which has been so common in other places. But the believers go on calm and steady. Let God do as seemeth him good."

Dec. 20. Having obtained a piece of ground, forty yards in length, to build a house for their meetings and public worship, they laid the first stone of the building. It being computed, that such a house as was proposed, could not be finished under seven hundred pounds, many were positive it would never be finished at all. "I was of another mind," says Mr. Wesley, "nothing doubting, but as it was begun for God's sake, he would provide what was needful for the finishing of it." December 30. He took his leave for the present of Newcastle, and the towns where he preached in the neighborhood, and came as far as Darlington that night. "What encouragement," says he, "have we to speak for God! At our inn we met an ancient man, who seemed by his conversation, never to have thought whether he had a soul or not. Before we set out, I spoke a few words concerning his cursing and idle conversation. The man appeared quite broken in pieces. The tears started into his eyes; and he acknowl-

edged, with abundance of thanks, his own guilt, and the goodness of God."

In this year, many societies were formed in Somersetshire, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire, and Nottinghamshire, as well as the southern parts of Yorkshire. And those in London, Bristol, and Kingswood, were much increased.

January 1, 1743. He reached Epworth; and the next day being Sunday, he preached at five in the morning; and again at eight, from his father's tomb-stone. "Many," says he, "from the neighboring towns, asked, if it would not be well, as it was sacrament-Sunday, for them to receive it? I told them, by all means; but it would be more respectful first to ask Mr. Romley, the curate's leave. One did so, in the name of the rest. To whom he said, 'Pray tell Mr. Wesley, I shall not give *him* the sacrament; for he is *not fit*.' "—It is no wonder, that a mind so wholly divested of christian charity, should be totally destitute of gratitude. This Mr. Romley owed his all in this world, to the tender love which Mr. Wesley's father had shown to his father, as well as personally to himself.

January 8. He came to Wednesbury, in Staffordshire, which his brother had already visited. At seven in the evening he preached in the town-hall. It was crowded with deeply attentive hearers. Mr. Egginton, the minister, seemed friendly disposed; and the prospect of doing much good, was fair and promising.—From hence Mr. Wesley went on to Bristol, and then to London. His stay was not long in either of these places. For February 14, notwithstanding the season of the year, and the badness of the roads at this time in many parts of England, he again set out on horseback for the North. On the 19th, he reached Newcastle: and here, and in the neighboring towns and villages he spent near six weeks, in preaching and exhorting, in praying and conversing with the people, and in regulating the societies. A great number of these societies were already formed exactly on the same principles, in various parts of the kingdom, though at a considerable distance one from another. But hitherto no general rules had been made to govern the whole. The two brothers, therefore, now drew up a set of rules which should be observed by the members of all their societies, and, as it were, unite them all into one body; so that a member at Newcastle, knew the rules of the society in London, as well as at the place where he resided. They were printed under the title of, "The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies, in London, Bristol, Newcastle upon Tyne," &c., and here it will be proper to insert them.

I. They state the nature and design of a Methodist society in the following words, "Such a society is no other than, a company of men, having the form, and seeking the power of godliness; united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to

watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation."

"That it may the more easily be discerned, whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called *classes*, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in every class; one of whom is styled the *leader*. It is his business, 1. To see each person in his class once a week at least, in order to inquire, how their souls prosper. To advise, reprove, comfort or exhort, as occasions require: to receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the poor. 2. To meet the minister and the *stewards* of the society once a week, in order to inform the minister of any that are sick; or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reproved: to pay to the stewards what they have received of their several classes, the week preceding; and, to show their account of what each person has contributed.

II. "There is one only condition previously required in those who desire admission into these societies, a desire 'to flee from the wrath to come,' to be saved from their sins. But wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

1. "By doing no harm, by avoiding evil in every kind; especially that which is most generally practised, such is

"The taking the name of God in vain: the profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or by buying or selling: drunkenness: buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity: fighting, quarrelling, brawling; brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing: the using many words in buying or selling: the buying or selling uncustomed goods: the giving or taking things on usury; i. e., unlawful interest: uncharitable or unprofitable conversation; particularly speaking evil of magistrates, or ministers: doing to others as we would not they should do unto us: doing what we know is not for the glory of God: as

"The putting on gold, or costly apparel: the taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus: the singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God: softness, or needless self-indulgence: laying up treasures upon earth: borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

"It is expected of all who continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation.

2. "By doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and as far as is possible to all men: to their bodies, of the ability which God giveth; by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the

naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick, or in prison. To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all they have intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine of devils, that, 'we are not to do good unless our hearts be free to it.'

"By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others; buying one of another; helping each other in business; and so much the more, because the world will love its own, and them only.

"By all possible diligence and frugality, that the gospel be not blamed: by running with patience the race that is set before them, 'denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily;' submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and off-scouring of the world; and looking that men should 'say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake.'

"It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation.

3. "By attending upon all the ordinances of God. Such are, the public worship of God: the ministry of the word, either read or expounded: the supper of the Lord: family and private prayer: searching the Scriptures; and fasting and abstinence.

"These are the general rules of our societies; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, the only rule, and the *sufficient* rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on every truly awakened heart. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be made known unto them who watch over that soul, as they that must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways: we will bear with him for a season. But if he repent not, he hath no more place with us. We have delivered our own soul.

"JOHN WESLEY,
"CHARLES WESLEY."

May 1, 1743.

The reader will take notice, 1. That the account here given of the *nature* and *design* of a Methodist society, differs essentially from the definitions hitherto given of a church. There is no mention of sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which was never administered except in a few of the larger societies, and then by a regular clergyman. The members were desired to attend this ordinance at the respective places of worship to which they belonged, and thereby continue their former church fellowship. Mr. Wesley, and the preachers with him, disclaimed every thought of making proselytes, and only sought to make Christians, among people of all denominations. 2. That, by the minister here mentioned, is meant a clergyman, the laymen who assisted being never called ministers, but simply preachers, or helpers of the ministers. One of these preachers, was afterwards called the assistant, because he was appointed to assist Mr. Wesley in the

government of the societies, and in his absence to enforce the rules, and direct every part of the discipline in the same manner Mr. Wesley would have done, had he been present.

Every member of the society was obliged to meet in class. But those, who, being justified by faith, had peace with God, and the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, were again divided into smaller companies, called bands; the men and women apart. Each band had a person called the leader, who met the little company once a week, and also received a small contribution for the poor. At the quarterly visitation, when the tickets were changed, these persons received a ticket with a B. printed upon it, signifying that they met in band. These are called band-tickets, and admit those who hold them into the meetings where the bands alone are assembled. The following are the

DIRECTIONS GIVEN TO THE BAND SOCIETIES.

"You are supposed to have the 'faith that overcometh the world.' To you, therefore, it is not grievous,

I. "Carefully to abstain from doing evil: in particular, 1. Neither to buy or sell anything at all on the Lord's day. 2. To taste no spirituous liquor, no dram of any kind, unless prescribed by a physician. 3. To be at a word both in buying and selling. 4. To pawn nothing, no not to save life. 5. Not to mention the fault of any behind his back. 6. To wear no needless ornaments, such as rings, ear-rings, necklaces, lace, ruffles. 7. To use no needless self-indulgence, such as taking snuff, or tobacco, unless prescribed by a physician.

II. "Zealously to maintain good works: in particular, 1. To give alms of such things as you possess, and that to the uttermost of your power. 2. To reprove all that sin in your sight, and that in love, and meekness of wisdom. 3. To be patterns of diligence and frugality, of self-denial, and taking up the cross daily.

III. "Constantly to attend on all the ordinances of God: in particular, 1. To be at church, and at the Lord's table every week; and at every public meeting of the bands. 2. To attend the public ministry of the word every morning,* unless distance, business, or sickness prevent. 3. To use private prayer every day: and family prayer, if you are the head of a family. 4. To read the Scriptures, and meditate therein, at every vacant hour. And, 5. To observe, as days of fasting and abstinence, all Fridays in the year."

On his return from Newcastle, Mr. Wesley again visited Wednesbury, where he found the society already increased to several hundreds. But a cloud was gathering over them which threatened a dreadful storm. The extreme folly of Mr. W——s, a preacher, I suppose, had so exasperated Mr. Egginton the minister, that his former love was turned into hatred. But he had not yet had time to work up the poor people into the rage and madness which afterwards

* This was always at five o'clock, winter and summer, in all kinds of weather.

appeared.—The Sunday following the scene began to open. "I think," says Mr. Wesley, "I never heard so wicked a sermon, and delivered with such bitterness of voice and manner, as that which Mr. Egginton preached in the afternoon. I knew what effect this must have in a little time, and therefore judged it expedient to prepare the poor people for what was to follow, that when it came, they might not be offended. Accordingly, I strongly enforced those words of our Lord, 'If any man come after me, and hate not his father and mother—yea, and his own life, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple.'"

Having visited Bristol, and Wales, he returned to London; and May 29, began to officiate at the chapel in West-Street, near the Seven-Dials; built about sixty years before, by the French Protestants. By a strange chain of providences, a lease was obtained of this chapel, and the Methodists continue to hold it to the present time.

At this period Mr. Wesley staid but a short time in any place; he was, what the Reverend Mr. Lewis of Holt, some time after called him, an *individuum vagum*, a mere wanderer; for purposes however, which appeared to him of the utmost importance to the happiness of men. After having visited the classes, and set in order such things as required his care and attention, he set out for the North, taking the societies in Staffordshire, and various other places in his way to Newcastle, and again reached London in the latter end of July. In August, he observes, "Having found for some time a strong desire to unite with Mr. Whitefield as far as possible, to cut off needless dispute, I wrote down my sentiments as plain as I could in the following terms. There are three points in debate, 1. Unconditional election; 2. Irresistible grace; 3. Final perseverance. With regard to the first, unconditional election, I believe,

"That God before the foundation of the world, did unconditionally elect certain persons to do certain works; as Paul to preach the gospel: that he has unconditionally elected some nations to receive peculiar privileges, the Jewish nation in particular: that he has unconditionally elected some nations to hear the gospel, as England and Scotland now, and many others in past ages: that he has unconditionally elected some persons to many peculiar advantages, both with regard to temporal and spiritual things: and I do not deny, though I cannot prove it is so, that he has unconditionally elected some persons to eternal glory.

"But I cannot believe, That all those who are *not* thus elected to glory, *must* perish everlastingly: or, that there is one soul on earth, who has never had a *possibility* of escaping eternal damnation.

"With regard to the second, irresistible grace; I believe, That the grace which brings faith, and thereby salvation into the soul, is irre-

sistible *at that moment:* that most believers may remember some time when God irresistibly convinced them of sin: that most believers do at some other times, find God irresistibly acting upon their souls: yet I believe, that the grace of God both before and after those moments, may be, and hath been resisted; and that, in general, it does not act irresistibly, but we *may* comply therewith, or *may not.* And I do not deny, that in *some* souls the grace of God is so far irresistible, that they cannot but believe, and be finally saved.

"But I cannot believe, that all those *must* be damned, in whom it does not thus irresistibly work: or, that there is one soul on earth, who has not, and never had any other grace, than such as does in fact increase his damnation, and was designed of God so to do.

"With regard to the third, final perseverance, I am inclined to believe, that there is a state attainable in this life, from which a man cannot finally fall: and that he has attained this, who can say, Old things are passed way; all things in me are become new."

August 26. Mr. Wesley set out for Cornwall, where his brother and two of the preachers had already labored with great success: but he made no considerable stop, till he came to St. Ives. Some time before, Captain Turner, of Bristol, connected it seems with the Methodists, had put in here, and was agreeably surprised to find a little society formed upon Dr. Woodward's plan, who constantly met together.—They were greatly refreshed and strengthened by him, as he also was by them. This was the occasion of introducing the Methodists to this place. Mr. Wesley spake severally with those of the society, now increased to about a hundred and twenty; near a hundred of whom had found peace with God. He spent three weeks in preaching here, and in Zennor, Morva, St. Just, Sennan, St. Mary's (one of the Isles of Scilly) Gwenap, and on several of the Downs throughout the west of Cornwall. It has pleased God, to give increase to the seed sown by his servants, so that, it has since produced an abundant harvest. There is hardly any part of the three kingdoms where a change has been more visible and general, in the manners of the people. *Hurling*, their favorite diversion, at which limbs were often broken, and frequently lives lost, is now hardly heard of: and that scandal of humanity, so constantly practised on the coasts of Cornwall, the plundering vessels that struck upon the rocks, and often murdering those who escaped out of the wreck, is now either quite at an end, or the gentlemen, not the poor tinners, are to be blamed. And more has been done to suppress smuggling, by preaching in this county and enforcing the rules of the society, than either the laws of the country, or the officers of excise, were ever able to effect. But it is not harmlessness, or outward decency alone, which has so increased, but the religion of the heart; faith working by love, producing all inward as well as outward holiness.

October 3. Having visited Wales, he returned to Bristol, and now

received full information of the riots at Wednesbury. Mr. Egginton, assisted by two neighboring justices, Mr. Lane of Bentley-Hall, and Mr. Persehouse of Walsal, having stirred up the basest of the people, such outrages followed as were a scandal to the christian name. Riotous mobs were summoned together by sound of horn; men, women, and children abused in the most shocking manner; being beaten, stoned, covered with mud; some, even pregnant women, treated in a manner that cannot be mentioned. Meantime their houses were broke open by any that pleased, and their goods spoiled or carried away, at Wednesbury, Darlaston, West-Bromwich, &c. some of the owners standing by, but not daring to gainsay, as it would have been at the peril of their lives. Mr. Wesley thought it was his duty to visit this harassed people in their distress, and on the 17th, set forward towards this scene of confusion and outrage. On the 20th, having preached at Birmingham, he rode over to Wednesbury, and preached at noon in a ground near the middle of the town, on Jesus Christ 'the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.'—"No creature offered to molest us," says Mr. Wesley, "either going or coming: but the Lord fought for us, and we held our peace."

Mr. Wesley proceeds. "I was writing at Francis Ward's in the afternoon, when the cry arose, that the mob had beset the house.—We prayed that God would disperse them: and so it was; one went this way, and another that, so that in a half an hour not a man was left. I told our brethren now is the time to go: but they pressed me exceedingly to stay. So, that I might not offend them, I sat down, though I foresaw what would follow. Before five the mob surrounded the house again, and in greater numbers than ever. The cry of one and all was, 'Bring out the minister, we will have the minister.' I desired one to take the captain by the hand and bring him into the house. After a few sentences interchanged between us, the lion was become a lamb. I desired him to go, and bring one or two of the most angry of his companions. He brought in two, who were ready to swallow the ground with rage: but in two minutes they were as calm as he. I then bade them make way, that I might go out among the people. As soon as I was in the midst of them, I called for a chair, and asked, 'What do any of you want with me?' Some said, we want you to go with us to the justice. I replied, that I will with all my heart. I then spoke a few words, which God applied; so that they cried out with might and main, 'The gentleman is an honest gentleman, and we will spill our blood in his defence.' I asked, 'Shall we go to the justice to-night or in the morning?' Most of them cried, 'To-night, to-night:' on which I went before, and two or three hundred followed, the rest returning whence they came.

"The night came on before we had walked a mile, together with heavy rain. However, on we went to Bentley-Hall, two miles from Wednesbury. One or two ran before, to tell Mr. Lane, 'They had

brought Mr. Wesley before his worship.' Mr. Lane replied, 'What have I to do with Mr. Wesley? Go and carry him back again.' By this time the main body came up, and began knocking at the door. A servant told them, Mr. Lane was in bed. His son followed, and asked, what was the matter? One replied, 'Why, an 't please you, they sing psalms all day; nay, and make folks rise at five in the morning. And what would your worship advise us to do?' 'To go home,' said Mr. Lane, 'and be quiet.'

"Here they were at a full stop, till one advised to go to Justice Persehouse, at Walsal. All agreed to this: so we hastened on, and about seven came to his house. But Mr. Persehouse likewise sent word, that he was in bed. Now they were at a stand again: but at last they all thought it the wisest course to make the best of their way home. About fifty of them undertook to convoy me. But we had not gone a hundred yards, when the mob of Walsal came pouring in like a flood, and bore down all before them. The Darlaston mob made what defence they could; but they were weary, as well as out-numbered: so that, in a short time, many being knocked down, the rest went away, and left me in their hands.

"To attempt speaking was vain; for the noise on every side was like the roaring of the sea. So they dragged me along till we came to the town: where seeing the door of a large house open, I attempted to go in; but a man catching me by the hair, pulled me back into the middle of the mob. They made no more stop till they had carried me through the main street, from one end of the town to the other.—I continued speaking all the time to those within hearing, feeling no pain or weariness. At the west-end of the town, seeing a door half open, I made towards it, and would have gone in. But a gentleman in the shop would not suffer me, saying, they would pull the house to the ground. However, I stood at the door and asked, 'Are you willing to hear me speak?' Many cried out, 'No, no! knock his brains out: down with him: kill him at once.' Others said, 'Nay; but we will hear him first.' I began asking, 'What evil have I done? Which of you all have I wronged in word or deed?' And continued speaking for above a quarter of an hour, till my voice suddenly failed. Then the floods began to lift up their voices again; many crying out, 'Bring him away, bring him away.'

"In the mean time my strength and my voice returned, and I broke out aloud into prayer. And now the man who just before headed the mob, turned and said, 'Sir, I will spend my life for you. Follow me, and not one soul here shall touch a hair of your head.' Two or three of his fellows confirmed his words, and got close to me immediately. At the same time the gentleman in the shop cried out, 'For shame, for shame, let him go.' An honest butcher, who was a little further off, said it was a shame they should do thus: and pulled back four or five, one after another, who were running on the most fiercely.

The people then, as if it had been by common consent, fell back to the right and left: while those three or four men took me between them, and carried me through them all. But on the bridge the mob rallied again; we therefore went on one side, over the mill-dam, and thence through the meadows: till a little before ten, God brought me safe to Wednesbury; having lost only one flap of my waistcoat, and a little skin from one of my hands.

"From the beginning to the end, I found the same presence of mind, as if I had been sitting in my own study. But I took no thought for one moment before another: only once it came into my mind, that if they should throw me into the river, it would spoil the papers that were in my pocket. For myself, I did not doubt but I should swim across, having but a thin coat, and a light pair of boots.

"The circumstances that follow, I thought were particularly remarkable. 1. That many endeavored to throw me down while we were going down hill, on a slippery path to the town; as well judging, that if I was once on the ground, I should hardly rise any more. But I made no stumble at all, nor the least slip, till I was entirely out of their hands. 2. That although many strove to lay hold on my collar or clothes, to pull me down, they could not fasten at all: only one got fast hold of the flap of my waistcoat, which was soon left in his hand. 3. That a lusty man just behind, struck at me several times, with a large oaken stick; with which if he had struck me once on the back part of my head, it would have saved him all further trouble. But every time the blow was turned aside, I know not how. 4. That another came rushing through the press, and raising his arm to strike, on a sudden let it drop, and only stroked my head, saying, 'What soft hair he has!' 5. That I stopped exactly at the mayor's door, as if I had known it, which the mob doubtless thought I did, and found him standing in the shop; which gave the first check to the madness of the people. 6. That the very first men whose hearts were turned, were the heroes of the town, the captains of the rabble on all occasions; one of them having been a prize-fighter at the bear-gardens. 7. That from first to last, I heard none give me a reviling word, or call me by any *opprobrious* name whatever. But the cry of one and all was, 'The preacher! the preacher! the parson! the minister!' 8. That no creature, at least within my hearing, laid anything to my charge, either true or false; having in the hurry quite forgot to provide themselves with an accusation of any kind. And lastly, they were utterly at a loss, what they should do with me; none proposing any determinate thing; only, 'Away with him, kill him at once.'

"When I came back to Francis Ward's, I found many of our brethren waiting upon God. Many also whom I had never seen before, came to rejoice with us. And the next morning as I rode through the town, in my way to Nottingham, every one I met

expressed such a cordial affection, that I could scarce believe what I saw and heard.

"I cannot close this head, without inserting as great a curiosity in its kind, as, I believe, was ever yet seen in England; which had its birth within a very few days of this remarkable occurrence at Walsal.

"*Staffordshire.*

"To all High-Constables, Petty-Constables, and other of his Majesty's Peace-officers within the said county, &c.

"Whereas we his majesty's justices of the peace, for the said county of Stafford, have received information, that several disorderly persons, styling themselves Methodist preachers, go about raising routs and riots, to the great damage of his majesty's liege people, and against the peace of our sovereign lord the king:

"These are in his majesty's name, to command you, and every one of you, within your respective districts, to make diligent search after the said Methodist preachers, and to bring him or them before some of us his said majesty's justices of the peace, to be examined concerning their unlawful doings.

"Given under our hands and seals this day of October, 1743.

J. LANE,
W. PERSEHOUSE."

It appears from the preceding account, that these were the two justices to whom the mob carried Mr. Wesley, and who severally refused to see him. What is it a mob will not dare to do, when encouraged to break the peace, by the very men who are sworn to maintain it!

Mr. Wesley now went forwards toward the north, and on Sunday, Oct. 30, being at Wensley, he preached in the church, on, "What must I do to be saved?" He showed in the plainest terms he could devise, that outward religion will not bring us to heaven: that none can go thither without inward holiness, which is only to be attained by faith. As he went back through the church-yard, many of the parish were in high debate, what religion this preacher was of? Some said he must be a Quaker; others, an Anabaptist: but at length one deeper learned than the rest, brought them all clearly over to his opinion, that he was, a Presbyterian-Papist!

February 15, 1744. A report prevailed that the French threatened an invasion, and were expected to land every hour, in support of Charles Stuart, the pretender to the crown of England. At this critical time, many addresses were sent up to the throne, expressing attachment to the principles of the revolution, and to the king's person and government. The alarm was general; the principles of the Methodists were but imperfectly known, and their itinerancy and private societies brought them under general suspicion. Mr. Wesley was therefore desired to write an address to the king, and March 5, he complied with the request and wrote as follows:

"To the King's Most Excellent Majesty:

"The humble Address of the Societies in England and Wales, in derision called Methodists.

"MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

"So inconsiderable as we are, a people scattered and peeled and trodden under foot from the beginning hitherto, we should in no wise have presumed, even on this great occasion, to open our lips to your majesty, had we not been induced, indeed constrained so to do, by two considerations: the one, that in spite of all our remonstrances on that head, we are continually represented as a peculiar sect of men, separating ourselves from the established church; the other, that we are still traduced as inclined to popery, and consequently disaffected to your Majesty.

"Upon these considerations, we think it incumbent upon us, if we must stand as a distinct body from our brethren, to tender for ourselves, our most dutiful regards to your sacred Majesty: and to declare in the presence of him we serve, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, that we are a part, however mean, of that Protestant church established in these kingdoms: that we unite together for this and no other end, to promote, so far as we be capable, justice, mercy, and truth; the glory of God, and peace and good will among men: that we detest and abhor the fundamental doctrines of the church of Rome, and are steadily attached to your Majesty's royal person and illustrious house.

"We cannot indeed, say or do either more or less, than we apprehend consistent with the written word of God. But we are ready to obey your Majesty to the uttermost, in all things which we conceive to be agreeable thereto. And we earnestly exhort all with whom we converse, as they fear God, to honor the king. We of the clergy in particular, put all men in mind to revere the higher powers, as of God: and continually declare, ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

"Silver and gold, most of us must own, we have none. But such as we have, we humbly beg your Majesty to accept: together with our hearts and prayers: may he who hath bought us with his blood, the Prince of all the kings of the earth, fight against all the enemies of your Majesty, with the two-edged sword that cometh out of his mouth! And when he calleth your Majesty from this throne, full of years and victories, may it be with that voice, 'Come, receive the kingdom prepared for thee, from the beginning of the world!'

"These are the continual prayers of, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, John Wesley, &c."—This address was not presented; it being on further consideration, judged best to lay it aside.*

"In April," says Mr. Wesley, "I took a second journey into Corn-

* See vol. i. page 172.

wall, and went through many towns I had not seen before. Since my former visit, there had been hot persecution both of the preachers and people. The preaching-house, at St. Ives, was pulled to the ground: one of the preachers pressed and sent for a soldier, as were several of the people: over and above the being stoned, covered with dirt and the like, which was the treatment many of them met with from day to day. But notwithstanding this they who had been eminent for hurling, fighting, drinking, and all manner of wickedness, continued eminent for sobriety, piety, and all manner of goodness. In all parts, more and more of the lions became lambs, continually praising God, and calling their old companions in sin, to come and magnify the Lord together. About the same time John Nelson, and Thomas Beard, were pressed and sent for soldiers, for no other crime, either committed or pretended, than that of calling sinners to repentance. The case of John Nelson is well known. Thomas Beard also, was nothing terrified by his adversaries. Yet the body after a while sunk under its burden. He was then lodged in the hospital of Newcastle, where he still praised God continually. His fever increasing, he was let blood: his arm festered, mortified and was cut off: two or three days after which, God signed his discharge, and called him up to his eternal home.

"All this year the alarms were uninterrupted, from the French on the one hand, and the rebels on the other: and a general panic ran through the nation, from the east to the west, from the north to the south. I judged it the more needful to visit as many places as possible, and avail myself of the precious opportunity. My brother and our other preachers were of the same mind: they spoke and spared not. They rushed through every open door, 'And cried, sinners behold the Lamb!' And their word did not fall to the ground: they saw abundant fruit of their labor. I went through many parts of Wales: through most of the midland counties; and then through Lincolnshire, and Yorkshire to Newcastle upon Tyne. And multitudes who were utterly careless before, did now prepare to meet their God."

The persecution at St. Ives, Mr. Wesley observes, "Was owing in great measure to the indefatigable labors of Mr. Hoblin, and Mr. Simmons: gentlemen worthy to be had in everlasting remembrance, for their unwearied endeavors to destroy heresy.

"Fortunati ambo! Siquid mea pagina possit,
Nulla dies unquam memori vos eximet ævo."

Happy both! Long as my writings, shall your fame remain.

The riots in Staffordshire still continued in the beginning of this year. The mob of Walsal, Darlaston, and Wednesbury, hired for the purpose by their betters, broke open their poor neighbors' houses at their pleasure, by day and by night, extorting money from the few that had it; taking away, or destroying their victuals and goods;

beating and wounding their bodies; abusing their women, and openly declaring they would destroy every Methodist in the country: the christian country where his majesty's peaceable and loyal subjects were so treated for eight months, and then publicly branded in the Whitehall and London Evening-Post, for rioters and incendiaries!

From Cornwall, Mr. Wesley passed over into Wales; on his return he made a short stay at Bristol, and then set out for the north, visiting most of the societies in his way to Newcastle. June 20, he returned to London, where he met his brother, two or three other clergymen, and a few of the preachers, whom he had appointed to come from various parts, to *confer* with them on the affairs of the societies. Mr. Wesley observes, "Monday, June 25, and the five following days, we spent in *conference* with our preachers, seriously considering, by what means we might the most effectually save our own souls and them that heard us. And the result of our consultations we set down, to be the RULE *of our future practice.*"—This was the first Methodist Conference: and for the better regulation of their affairs, a conference has been held annually ever since; Mr. Wesley having presided at forty-seven such conferences. The subjects of their deliberations were proposed in the form of questions, which were amply discussed; and the questions with the answers agreed upon were written down, and afterwards printed, under the title of, "Minutes of several Conversations between the Reverend Mr. Wesley and others:" commonly called "Minutes of Conference."

CHAPTER II.

CONTAINING A FURTHER ACCOUNT OF MR. WESLEY'S LABORS: A SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES OF CONFERENCE RESPECTING THE DOCTRINES HE TAUGHT: AND A VIEW OF THE SPREAD OF METHODISM UNTIL THE CONFERENCE IN 1751.

THE plan on which Mr. Wesley had hitherto governed the societies and the preachers, was imperfect; and as the number increased must soon have become insupportably laborious. When the preachers at first went out to exhort and preach it was by Mr. Wesley's permission and authority; some from one part of the kingdom, some from another: and though strangers, yet on his credit and sanction alone, they were received and provided for as friends, by the societies wherever they came. But having little or no communication or intercourse with one another, nor any subordination among themselves, they must have been under a continual necessity of recurring to Mr. Wesley for direction, how and where each one was to labor. By calling

them together to a conference, he brought them into closer union with each other, and made them sensible of the utility of acting in concert and harmony under his direction and appointment. He soon found it necessary, however, to bring their itinerancy under certain regulations, and reduce it to some fixed order; both to prevent confusion, and for his own ease. He therefore took fifteen or twenty societies, more or less, which lay round some principal society in those parts, and which were so situated, that the greatest distance from one to the other was not much more than twenty miles, and united them into what was called a *circuit*. At the yearly conference, he appointed two, three, or four preachers to one of these circuits, according to its extent, which at first was often very considerable, sometimes taking in part of three or four counties. Here, and here only, they were to labor for one year, that is, until the next conference. One of the preachers on every circuit, was called the Assistant, for the reason before mentioned. He took charge of all the societies within the limits assigned him; he enforced the rules every where; and superintended, and directed the labors of the preachers associated with him. Having received a list of the societies forming his circuit, he took his own station in it, gave to the other preachers a plan of it, and pointed out the day when each should be at the place fixed for him, to begin a progressive motion round it, in such order as the plan directed. They now followed one another through all the societies belonging to that circuit at stated distances of time; all being governed by the same rule, and undergoing the same labor. By this plan, every preacher's daily work was appointed beforehand, each knew every day where the others were, and each society when to expect the preacher, and how long he would stay with them. But of late years, since the great increase of Methodism, the circuits have been divided and subdivided, which has made way for a great increase of preachers, and rendered the fatigues of itinerancy trifling, compared with what they were in the beginning. Many of the preachers too, have been suffered to stay two years, sometimes three, on the same circuit, and even then have been removed to a circuit only a few miles distant. Nay, it is said, that the societies in London itself, with the places adjacent, have been divided into three circuits, by which a few preachers may become stationary for a great number of years. Mr. Wesley considered itinerancy as of the utmost importance to Methodism: but by dividing the circuits in this manner, the effects of it have already been much diminished, and may in time be totally destroyed.

The conference being ended, Mr. Wesley observes, "The next week we endeavored to purge the society of all that did not walk worthy of the gospel. By this means we reduced the number of members to less than nineteen hundred. But number is an inconsiderable circumstance. May God increase them in faith and love!" This shows us, the astonishing increase of members in the Methodist

societies. Four years before this period, Mr. Wesley separated from the brethren at Fetter-Lane, and soon after fifty or sixty joined with him: these were now increased, in and about London, to nineteen hundred! Had the original piety, zeal, and disinterestedness been preserved unabated among the preachers, and their first plan inviolably kept in every place, it is impossible to say how far the beneficial influence of Methodism over the morals of the people of all ranks in this nation, would have been extended!

"August 24, St. Bartholomew's Day," says Mr. Wesley, "I preached for the last time before the university of Oxford. I am now clear of the blood of these men. I have fully delivered my own soul. And I am well pleased that it should be the very day, on which, in the last century, near two thousand burning and shining lights, were put out at one stroke.* Yet what a wide difference is there between their case and mine! They were turned out of house and home, and all that they had: whereas I am only hindered from preaching, without any other loss; and that in a kind of honorable manner: it being determined, that when my next turn to preach came, they would pay another person to preach for me. And so they did twice or thrice; even to the time that I resigned my fellowship."

All this summer the preachers and people of Cornwall, had hard service, the war against the Methodists being carried on more vigorously than that against the Spaniards. In September, Mr. Wesley received the following letter from Mr. Henry Millard, one of the preachers in Cornwall, giving some account of their difficulties. "The word of God," says he, "has free course here: it runs and is glorified. But the devil rages horribly. Even at St. Ives, we cannot shut the door of John Nance's house to meet the society, but the mob immediately threatens to break it open. And in other places it is worse. I was going to Crowan on Tuesday, and within a quarter of a mile of the place where I was to preach, when some one met me, and begged me not to go up: saying, 'If you do, there will surely be murder; if there is not already: for many were knocked down, before we came away.' By their advice I turned back to the house where I had left my horse. We had been there but a short time, when many people came in very bloody. But the main cry of the mob was, 'Where is the preacher?'

* Bartholomew's Day has been twice remarkable for the cruelties exercised upon it. The first instance was, the massacre of seventy thousand French Protestants throughout the kingdom of France, by the Papists, attended with circumstances of the most horrid treachery and cruelty. It began at Paris, in the night of the festival of St. Bartholomew, August 24, 1572, by secret orders from Charles IX. king of France, at the instigation of the Queen Dowager, Catharine de Medicis, his mother. The second instance was the Act of Uniformity, which was enforced on Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1662, by which two thousand ministers, many of them the most pious and learned men in the nation, were cast out from the Church of England, because they could not conform to certain ceremonies in divine worship, which the bishops chose to impose upon them. By this proceeding they were not only deprived of their usefulness, but many of them with their families, reduced to poverty and want.

whom they sought for in every part of the house; swearing bitterly, 'If we can but knock him on the head, we shall be satisfied.'

"Not finding me, they said, 'However we shall catch him on Sunday at Cambourn.' But it was Mr. Westall's turn to be there. While he was preaching at Mr. Harris's, a tall man came in, and pulled him down. Mr. Harris demanded his warrant; but he swore, 'Warrant or no warrant, he shall go with me.' So he carried him out to the mob, who took him away to the church-town. They kept him there till the Tuesday morning, when the Rev. Dr. Borlase wrote his *mittimus*, by virtue of which he was to be committed to the house of correction at Bodmin, as a vagrant. So they took him as far as Cambourn that night, and the next day to Bodmin."

The justices who met at the next quarter sessions in Bodmin, knowing a little more of the laws of God and man, or at least showing more regard for them, than Dr. Borlase, declared Mr. Westall's commitment to be contrary to all law, and immediately set him at liberty.*

All this year God was carrying on the same work, that is, reformation of manners on evangelical principles, in the English army abroad, though on a smaller scale: some account of which Mr. Wesley received from one of their preachers, in the following letter dated November. "We make bold," says Mr. Evans, the writer, "to trouble you with this, to acquaint you with some of the Lord's dealings with us here. We have hired two rooms: one small, wherein a few of us meet every day: and another large, wherein we meet for public service twice a day, at nine and at four. And the hand of the omnipotent God is with us, to the pulling down of the strongholds of satan.

"The seventh instant, when we were met together in the evening, as I was at prayer, one that was kneeling by me, cried out like a woman in travail, 'My Redeemer! my Redeemer!' When he was asked, what was the matter? he said, 'he had found that which he had often heard of, an heaven upon earth.' And several others had much ado to forbear crying out in the same manner.

"Dear sir, I am a stranger to you in the flesh. I know not, if I have seen you above once, when I saw you preaching on Kennington Common. I then hated you as much as, by the grace of God, I love you now. The Lord pursued me with convictions from my infancy; and I made many good resolutions. But finding I could not keep them, I at length gave myself over to all manner of profaneness. So I continued till the battle of Dettingen. The balls there came very

* How seldom have we seen clergymen in the commission of the peace, but they have neglected the duties of their profession, and grossly abused the power committed to them! Our Lord declared his kingdom was not of this world: and when his ministers of any denomination, obtain dominion and authority over the temporal things of others, or acquire any share in the civil government, it seems as if a curse attended every thing they do. They mar whatever they meddle with; and occasion infinite confusion and mischief.

thick about me, and my comrades fell on every side. Yet I was preserved unhurt. A few days after, the Lord was pleased to visit me. The pains of hell got hold upon me; the snares of death encompassed me. I durst no longer commit any outward sin, and I prayed God to be merciful to my soul. Now I was at a loss for books: but God took care of this also. One day I found an old Bible in one of the train waggons. This was now my only companion; and I believed myself a very good Christian, till we came to winter quarters, where I met with John Haine. But I was soon sick of his company; for he robbed me of my treasure, telling me, I and my works were going to hell together. This was strange doctrine to me, and as I was of a stubborn temper, he sometimes resolved to forbid my coming to him any more.

"When the Lord had at length opened my eyes, and shown me, that by grace we are saved through faith, I began immediately to declare it to others, though I had not yet experienced it myself. But October 23, as William Clements was at prayer, I felt on a sudden, a great alteration in my soul. My eyes overflowed with tears of love: I knew, I was through Christ, reconciled to God; which inflamed my soul with love to him, whom I now saw to be my complete Redeemer.

"O the tender care of Almighty God in bringing up his children! Dear sir, I beg you will pray for him, who is not worthy to be a doorkeeper to the least of my Master's servants."

February 4, 1745, Mr. Wesley observes, "I had the pleasure of receiving from Dr. Hartley, a particular account of Dr. Cheyne's last hours.* During his last illness he felt a gentle and gradual decay,

* Dr. George Cheyne, a physician of great learning and abilities, was born in Scotland, in 1671. He passed his youth in close study and great temperance. But coming to London, when about thirty, and finding the younger gentry and free-livers to be the most easy of access, he suddenly changed his former manner of living to associate with them; having observed that this method had succeeded to introduce some others into practice. The consequence was, that he grew daily in bulk, swelling to such an enormous size, that he exceeded thirty-two stone in weight, and was forced to have the whole side of his chariot made open to receive him: he grew short-breathed, lethargic, nervous and scorbutic; so that his life became an intolerable burden. After trying all the power of medicine in vain, he resolved to try a milk and vegetable diet; the good effects of which soon appeared. His size reduced almost a third; and he recovered his strength, activity, and cheerfulness, with the perfect use of all his faculties. He lived to a mature period, dying at Bath in 1742, aged 72. He wrote several treatises that were well received; particularly, "An Essay on Health and Long Life;" and, "The English Malady, or a Treatise of Nervous Diseases;" both the result of his own experience. His "Philosophical Principles of Natural Religion, published in 1705, is a work that shows great strength of mind, and extensive knowledge. Mr. Wesley was well acquainted with him, and always spake of him with esteem.

David Hartley, M. A. here mentioned by Mr. Wesley, was born at Ilingworth, where his father was curate, and received his academical education at Jesus College, Cambridge, of which he was a fellow. He first began to practise physic at Newark, in Nottinghamshire; from whence he removed to St. Edmund's Bury, in Suffolk. After this, he settled for some time in London; and lastly went to live at Bath, where he died in 1757, aged fifty-three. His most considerable literary production, is a work entitled, "Observations on Man, his frame, his duty, and his expectations, in two parts;" London, 1749, 2 vols.

so that he apprehended what the event would be. But it did not appear to give him any concern. He seemed quite loose from all below, till without any struggle, either of body or mind, he calmly gave up his soul to God."

March 11, Mr. Wesley observes, "Many persons still representing the Methodists as enemies to the clergy, I wrote to a friend the real state of the case, in as plain a manner as I could.

"1. About seven years since, we began preaching inward, present salvation, as attainable by faith alone. 2. For preaching this doctrine we are forbidden to preach in most churches. 3. We then preached in private houses, and when the houses could not contain the people, in the open air. 4. For this many of the clergy preached or printed against us, as both heretics and schismatics. 5. Persons who were convinced of sin, begged us to advise them more particularly, how to flee from the wrath to come? We desired them, being many, to come at one time, and we would endeavor it. 6. For this we were presented both from the pulpit and press, as introducing Popery, and raising sedition. Yea, all manner of evil was said both of us, and of those who used to assemble with us. 7. Finding that some of these *did* walk disorderly, we desired them not to come to us any more. 8. And some of the others we desired to overlook the rest, that we might know whether they walked worthy of the gospel. 9. Several of the clergy now stirred up the people, to treat us as outlaws or mad dogs. 10. The people did so both in Staffordshire, Cornwall, and many other places. 11. And they do so still wherever they are not restrained by fear of the magistrates.

8vo. of which, a few years ago, a second edition was published. The first part contains observations on the frame of the human body and mind, and their mutual connections and influences. This is a most curious and ingenious system; but it is founded on conjecture, and the parts are held together only by a vague and uncertain analogy. Dr. Hartley supposes, that what has been called the nervous fluid, is a fine elastic ether, through which vibrations are propagated to the brain, and through the whole of its substance. By these vibrations, and their various combinations and associations, he attempts to explain the operations of the soul. But he has not proved the existence of such an ether, nor of the vibrations which he supposes to exist. And if he had, yet he ought to have explained to us in the clearest manner, how these vibrations are the mechanical causes of the operations of the mind; or at least have shown, that there is a constant correspondence and harmony between the laws they observe, and the laws of the phenomena they are brought to explain. But neither of these things has he done. The first he has totally omitted; and in attempting the latter, his analogical reasoning is so vague and uncertain, that no man of common prudence would act upon such evidence in the affairs of life in which he was much interested. In reference to this subject the authors of the Encyclopedia Britannica observe, "We think it our duty to remonstrate against this slovenly way of writing: we would even hold it up to reprobation. It has been chiefly on this faithless foundation, that the blind vanity of men has built that degrading system of opinions called MATERIALISM, by which the affections and faculties of the soul of man have been resolved into vibrations and pulses of ether."

Dr. Reid, in his Essays on the Intellectual and Active Powers of Man, 2 vols. 4to. has proceeded on a plan much more simple and satisfactory. Soon after the first volume was published, I asked the late Dr. Price, his opinion of it: he replied, "I think it unanswerable, either by Dr. Priestley, or any other person."

"Now what can *we* do, or what can *you* or our brethren do, towards healing this breach? Desire of *us* any thing which we can do with a safe conscience, and we will do it immediately. Will *you* meet us here? Will you do what we desire of you, so far as you can with a safe conscience?

"Do you desire of us, 1. To preach another, or to desist from preaching this doctrine? We cannot do this with a safe conscience.

"Do you desire us, 2. To desist from preaching in *private houses*, or *in the open air?* As things are now circumstanced, this would be the same as desiring us not to preach at all.

"Do you desire us, 3. Not to advise those who meet together for that purpose? To dissolve our societies? We cannot do this with a safe conscience; for we apprehend many souls would be lost thereby.

"Do you desire us, 4. To advise them one by one? This is impossible because of their numbers.

"Do you desire us, 5. To suffer those who walk disorderly, still to mix with the rest? Neither can we do this with a safe conscience: for evil communications corrupt good manners.

"Do you desire us, 6. To discharge those leaders, as we term them who overlook the rest? This is, in effect, to suffer the disorderly walkers still to remain with the rest.

"Do you desire us, lastly, to behave with tenderness, both to the characters and persons of our brethren the clergy? By the grace of God, we can and will do this: as indeed we have done to this day.

"If you ask what we desire of you to do? We answer, 1. We do not desire any of you, to let us preach in your church, either if you believe us to preach false doctrine, or if you have the least scruple. But we desire any who believes us to preach true doctrine, and has no scruple in the matter, not to be either publicly or privately discouraged from inviting us to preach in his church.

2. "We do not desire, that any who thinks it his duty to preach or print against us, should refrain therefrom. But we desire, that none will do this, till he has calmly considered both sides of the question; and that he would not condemn us unheard, but first read what we say in our own defence.

3. "We do not desire any favor, if either Popery, sedition, or immorality be proved against us. But we desire you would not credit without proof, any of those senseless tales that pass current with the vulgar; that if you do not credit them yourselves, you will not relate them to others: yea, that you will discountenance those who still retail them abroad.

4. "We do not desire any preferment, favor, or recommendation, from those that are in power, either in church or state. But we desire, 1. That if any thing material be laid to our charge, we may be permitted to answer for ourselves. 2. That you would hin-

der your dependants from stirring up the rabble against us, who are certainly not the proper judges in these matters: and 3. That you would effectually suppress and discountenance all riots and popular insurrections, which evidently strike at the foundation of all government, whether of church or state.

"Now these things you certainly can do, and that with a safe conscience. Therefore till these things be done, the continuance of the breach, if there be any, is chargeable on you, and you only."

In June Mr. Wesley paid another visit to Cornwall, where the preachers were continually persecuted, only not unto death; both by the great vulgar and the small. They showed a little more courtesy to him till July 4, when he went to see a gentlewoman at Falmouth, who had been long indisposed. "I had scarce," says he, "sat down, when the house was beset by an innumerable multitude of people. They quickly forced open the outer door and filled the passage, there being now only a wainscot-partition between us. Among them were, the crews of some privateers, who being angry at the slowness of the rest, thrust them away, and setting their shoulders to the inner-door cried out, 'Avast, lads, avast!' Away went all the hinges at once, and the door fell back into the room. I stepped forward into the midst of them and said, 'Here I am; which of you has any thing to say to me;' I continued speaking till I came into the middle of the street, though I could be heard by a few only. But all that could hear were still and quiet. At length, one or two of their captains turned and swore, 'Not a man shall touch him.' A clergyman then came up and asked, 'Are you not ashamed to use a stranger thus?'" He was seconded by some gentlemen of the town, who walked with Mr. Wesley to a friend's house. They then sent his horse by a person to Penryn, and sent him thither by water: the sea running close by the back-door of the house where he was.

On this occasion he makes the following observations: "I never saw before, no not even at Walsal, the hand of God so clearly shown as here. There I received blows, was covered with dirt, and lost part of my clothes. Here, although the hands of hundreds of people were lifted up to strike or throw, yet they were one and all stopped in the midway; so that not a man touched me with his fingers: neither was any thing thrown from first to last, so that I had not a speck of dirt upon my clothes. Who can deny that God heareth the prayer? Or that he hath all power in heaven and earth?"

August 1, and the following days, Mr. Wesley held the second Conference, with as many of the preachers as could conveniently be present. They reviewed their doctrines, and added such rules of discipline as the increase of the work required, or prudence suggested. These will all be laid before the reader as soon as they form something like a complete system.

In October, he was at Newcastle upon Tyne, where the English

army lay, to oppose the progress of the rebels. Observing with great concern, the drunkenness, and profane swearing that prevailed among the soldiers, he wrote the following letter to Alderman Ridley; which is highly characteristic of his zeal for the propagation of christian knowledge, and christian piety and virtue, considered as a national blessing.

"Sir—The fear of God, the love of my country, and the regard I have for his Majesty King George, constrain me to write a few plain words to one, who is no stranger to these principles of action.

"My soul has been pained day by day, even in walking the streets of Newcastle, at the senseless, shameless wickedness, the ignorant profaneness of the poor men to whom our lives are intrusted. The continual cursing and swearing, the wanton blasphemy of the soldiers in general, must needs be a torture to the sober ear, whether of a Christian or an honest infidel. Can any that either fear God or love their neighbor, hear this without concern? Especially if they consider the interest of our country, as well as of these unhappy men themselves? For can it be expected, that God should be on their side who are daily affronting him to his face? And if God be not on their side, how little will either their number, or courage, or strength avail!

"Is there no man that careth for these souls? Doubtless there are some who ought so to do. But many of these, if I am rightly informed, receive large pay, and do just nothing.

"I would to God it were in my power, in any degree, to supply their lack of service. I am ready to do what in me lies, to call these poor sinners to repentance, once or twice a day, while I remain in these parts, at any hour or at any place. And I desire no pay at all for doing this: unless what my Lord shall give at his appearing.

"If it were objected, that I should only fill their heads with peculiar whims and notions! That might easily be known. Only let the officers hear with their own ears: and they may judge, whether I do not preach the plain principles of manly, rational religion.

"Having myself no knowledge of the general, I took the liberty to make this offer to you. I have no interest herein: but I should rejoice to serve, as I am able, my king and country. If it be judged that this will be of no real service, let the proposal die and be forgotten. But I beg you, sir, to believe, that I have the same glorious cause, for which you have shown so becoming a zeal, earnestly at heart: and that therefore I am, with warm respect, sir,

"Your most obedient servant."

This letter was written on the 26th, and on the 31st, Mr. Wesley preached on Newcastle Town-Moor, at a small distance from the English camp. November 1, he preached again on a little eminence before the camp, and continued this practice occasionally till the 30th of this month. At half an hour after eight on this day, he preached

to a larger congregation than any before; and adds, "Were it only for the sake of this hour, I should not have thought much of staying at Newcastle longer than I intended. Between one and two in the afternoon, I went to the camp once more. Abundance of people now flocked together, horse and foot, rich and poor, to whom I declared, 'There is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.' I observed many Germans standing disconsolate in the skirts of the congregation. To these I was constrained, though I had discontinued it so long, to speak a few words in their own language. Immediately they gathered up close together, and drank in every word."

"All this year," says Mr. Wesley, "the work of God gradually increased in the Southern counties, as well as in the North of England. Many were awakened in a very remarkable manner: many were converted to God. Many were enabled to testify, that 'the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin.' Meantime we were in most places tolerably quiet, as to popular tumults. Where anything of the kind appeared, the Magistrates usually interposed, as indeed it was their duty to do. And wherever the peace officers do their duty, no riot can long subsist."

Mr. Wesley and his brother began to be spoken of in Scotland, and a few of the most pious ministers there, though differing from the two brothers on many points of doctrine, yet rejoiced in the great revival of practical religion in England, by their means. Mr. James Robe, minister of Killsyth, having received from a friend some account of them, wrote as follows: "I was much pleased with what you wrote to me of the Messrs. Wesleys. I rejoice that justification, the imputed righteousness of Jehovah our Righteousness, received by faith alone, and gospel holiness, are the subjects of their sermons; and the debated points (various sentiments about which are not inconsistent with saving faith and our acceptance with God) are laid aside. I embrace fellowship with them, and pray that the Lord of the vineyard may give them success in preaching the faith of Christ, so much needed in England.—As many as be perfect, let them be thus minded; and if in any other things ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless whereunto we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same things.—How good would it be for the christian world, if this were believed, and regarded as the word of God! When the happy days upon the wing are come, so it will be: and in as far as any have really shared in the late revival, it is so with them in some good measure. I learned something new, as to the exhorters,* from the account you gave of them. I look upon them as so many licensed probationers, or useful public teachers; which is the case of our probationers. It provides me with an answer to objections, besides that of the extraordinary circum-

* He means, the lay-preachers.

stances of the established church. I beg you to salute the two brothers for me, much in the Lord. I wrote to my correspondent formerly, upon yours to me from Newcastle, that there were hopes of their joining in our concert for prayer and praise, for the revival of real Christianity. Now I can write that they have acceded; and I hope we shall expressly remember one another before the throne of grace."

Mr. James Erskine, who frequently in the course of this year corresponded with Mr. Wesley, transmitted this part of Mr. Robe's letter to him; and with a liberality not common to Scotchmen at that time, he asks, "Are the points which give the different denominations (to Christians) and from whence proceed separate communions, animosities, evil-speakings, surmises, and, at least, coolness of affection, aptness to misconstrue, slowness to think well of others, stiffness in one's own conceits, and over-valuing one's own opinion, &c. &c. are these points (at least among the far greatest part of Protestants) as important, as clearly revealed, and as essential, or as closely connected with the essentials of practical Christianity, as the loving of one another with a pure heart fervently, and not forsaking, much less refusing, the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some was, and now of almost all is?"—Every candid man will most certainly answer this question in the negative. And it requires no great degree of discernment to perceive, that the narrow party spirit which prevails among most denominations of Christians with regard to communion and church fellowship, even where it is acknowledged that the essential doctrines of the gospel are held fast, is one grand hinderance of brotherly-love, and of a more general diffusion of real experimental religion.

In the latter end of this year, Mr. Wesley had expressed a desire to be useful to the Scots, and to preach the gospel in Scotland. His friend Mr. James Erskine wrote to him on the subject, and set before him some of the difficulties he would have to struggle with in the attempt. Mr. Erskine, in his letter expresses an ardent wish for union and christian fellowship among all those of different denominations and opinions, who love the Lord Jesus Christ. He reprobates the animosity and bigotry, too prevalent among them under the specious name of zeal for the truth. He then sets before him some of the difficulties he would meet with in attempting to preach and form societies in Scotland. "You have," says he, "some sentiments and ways of speaking different from the generality, and almost from all the real Christians of the Presbyterian persuasion in Scotland, among whom, from my long acquaintance with my countrymen, I cannot help thinking are about five in six of the real Christians there. And to my great regret, of these worthy people, I fear three out of five are wofully bigoted: a vice too natural to us Scots, from what our country-

man George Buchanan* wrote was our temper—*perfervidum Scotorum ingenium.* And some of you English have as much of it as any Scot; but it is not so national with you, as among the Scots.—You would have the same prejudices to struggle with among the

* George Buchanan, the best Latin poet of his time, perhaps inferior to none since the Augustan age, was born in the village of Killearn, in Sterlingshire, Scotland, in 1506. The abject poverty in which his father died, might have confined him to toil at the lowest employments of life, if the generosity of an uncle had not assisted him in his education, and enabled him to pursue his studies for two years, at Paris. But his uncle dying, he returned to Scotland, surrounded with the horrors of indigence. In this extremity, he enlisted for a soldier: but nature had not destined him for a hero, and he was disgusted with the first campaign. John Major, then professor of philosophy at St. Andrews, hearing of his necessity and his merit, afforded him a temporary relief. He now studied the subtilties of logic under John Maiz, whom he followed to Paris. There, after encountering many difficulties, he was invited to teach grammar in the college of St. Barbe. In this occupation he was found by the Earl of Cassels, with whom, having staid five years at Paris, he returned to Scotland. He next acted as preceptor to the famous Earl of Murray, the natural son of James V. But while he was forming this nobleman for public affairs, he found his life was in danger. He had written some beautiful but poignant satires against the Franciscan Monks; who in return branded him with the appellation of Atheist. Cardinal Beaton gave orders to apprehend him, and bribed King James, it is said, with a considerable sum to permit his execution. He was seized upon accordingly; and the first genius of the age was about to perish by the halter, or by fire, to satisfy the malignant resentment of men, whose false notions of religion have always made them thirst for the blood of their opponents. He happily eluded the vigilance of his guards, and escaped to England; from thence he went to France, and afterwards with his friend Govea, to Portugal. His friend died within the year, and left Buchanan exposed to his inveterate enemies, the monks. He was confined to a monastery, till he should learn what these men fancied to be religion. Here they enjoined him to translate the Psalms of David into Latin verse; a task which every man of taste knows with what admirable skill and genius he performed.

Having obtained his liberty, he had the offer of a speedy promotion from the King of Portugal; of which however, his aversion to the clergy would not allow him to wait the issue. He spent much of his time in France, which seems to have been more agreeable to his taste, than his native country. Queen Mary, having determined that he should have the charge of educating her son James, the sixth of Scotland, and the first of England, he was recalled, and provided for, till the young prince should arrive at a proper age. His success, as James's preceptor, is well known. When he was reproached with having made his majesty a pedant, "It is a wonder," said he, "that I have made so much of him." Mackenzie relates, that the young king being one day at play with his fellow-pupil, Buchanan, who was then reading, desired them to make less noise. Finding that they disregarded his admonition, he told his majesty, if he did not hold his tongue, he would certainly whip his breech. The king replied, he would be glad to see who would *bell the cat,* alluding to the fable. Buchanan, in a passion, threw the book from him, and gave his majesty a sound flogging. The old Countess of Mar, who was in the next apartment, rushed into the room, and taking the king in her arms, asked how he dared to lay his hand on *the Lord's anointed?* "Madam," said Buchanan, "I have whipped his a——; and you may kiss it, if you please."

On the misfortunes which befell Queen Mary, he went over to the party of the Earl of Murray; at whose earnest request he was prevailed upon to write his "Detection," a work which his greatest admirers have read with regret. After having vied with almost all the more eminent of the Latin poets, he contested with Livy and Sallust, the palm of political eloquence and sagacity. But it is to be lamented, that, like the former of these historians, he was not always careful to preserve himself from the charge of partiality. He died at Edinburgh, in 1582. His works were various. An edition of them collected together, was printed at Edinburgh in 1704, in 2 vols. folio. See Encyclop. Brit.

Presbyterians, that Mr. Whitefield had, that is, that you are of the Church of England, and use the Liturgy. And you would have more, because of the difference of sentiment, and ways of speaking, as to some doctrines, about which his opinions and expressions were the same as theirs: and though this might make you more acceptable to most of the Episcopal persuasion, yet your way of speaking of Christian perfection, and their regard for what they call church order and regularity, would make them fly from you; for which last the Presbyterians would not be so offended with you: and your urging so strict holiness in practice, would recommend you to the Presbyterians, but I am afraid not to the Episcopalians. And your doctrine of man's utter ruin by the fall, and utter inability to do anything for his own recovery; and the necessity of regeneration, and an interest in Christ by faith alone that works by love, and produces holiness in heart and life, &c. would be sweet to the Presbyterians, but not to many of the Episcopalians.

"Mr. Whitefield, in fewer months than one would have thought could have been done in as many years, overcame the prejudices of the far greatest part of the Presbyterians, especially the most religious, only by preaching that faith and holiness you preach; by meddling with no debates, and by the power of the Lord, signally accompanying his administrations: awakening, converting, and building up almost wherever he went, in places remote from one another. The same evangelical doctrine, of faith, holiness, regeneration, and divine influence, &c., and such blessed divine power on your administrations, managed with christian prudence and simplicity, and that wisdom from above which is profitable to direct, would likewise overcome the strong prejudices against you and your brother.

"But Mr. Whitefield had one other advantage which you would not have at present. The sermons and other things he had printed, were earnestly read by the Presbyterians, and were to their taste; as well as the sermons, conversations, and prayers among them. And there is hardly anything printed by your brother and you, in which I fear they would not find some thought or expression that would stumble and offend them."—Mr. Wesley did not go to Scotland, till some years after this period.

It was in this year also, that Mr. Wesley began a private correspondence with a clergyman of considerable abilities, and probably of high station, if not the highest in the church. He concealed his real name, and only said, as he lived at a considerable distance from London, a letter would find him, directed to John Smith, at Mr. Richard Mead's, the Golden-cross, Cheapside. He introduced himself to Mr. Wesley, in a very candid and liberal manner; and preserved candor and good temper through the greatest part of their controversy. He introduces himself thus:

"Reverend Sir,

"The laboring to bring all the world to solid inward vital religion, is a work so truly christian and laudable, that I shall ever highly esteem those who attempt this great work even though they should appear to me to be under some errors in doctrine, some mistakes in their conduct, and some excess in their zeal. You may therefore, expect in me a candid adversary; a contender for truth, and not for victory: one who would be glad to convince you of any error which he apprehends himself to have discovered in you; but who would be abundantly more glad to be convinced of errors in himself. Now, the best way to enable you to set me right wherever I may be wrong, will be by pointing out to you, what I have to object to those works of yours which have fallen into my hands: and for order sake I shall reduce my objections to matter of doctrine, to matter of phraseology, and to matter of fact."—He then mentions several particulars under the different heads, which he discusses with an open manly freedom, and a good degree of ingenuity and ability. He concludes his first letter thus, "Having now freely told you what I take to be wrong in you, I shall readily and thankfully attend to whatever you shall point out amiss in me. I am desirous to retract and amend whatever is wrong. To your general design of promoting true religion, I am a hearty friend: nay to your particular scheme and singularities, I am no enemy.—If I come not fully into your scheme, it is not for want of good will, but for want of evidence and conviction that it is true. I pray God to grant me all needful illumination: and I pray you to tell me what is lacking on my part."

Mr. Wesley received this letter with the same friendliness, and answered it with the same openness and candor, with which it was written. "I was determined," says he, in his reply, "from the time I received yours, to answer it as soon as I should have opportunity. But it was the longer delayed because I could not persuade myself to write at all, till I had leisure to write fully. And this I hope to do now; though I know you not, not so much as your name. But I take it for granted, you are a person that fears God, and that speaks the real sentiments of his heart. And on this supposition I shall speak without any suspicion or reserve.

"I am exceedingly obliged by the pains you have taken to point out to me what you think to be mistakes. It is a truly christian attempt, an act of brotherly love, which I pray God to repay seven-fold into your bosom. Methinks I can scarce look upon such a person, on one who is, 'a contender for truth, and not for victory,' whatever opinion he may entertain of me, as an adversary at all. For what is friendship, if I am to account him mine enemy who endeavors to open my eyes, or to amend my heart."—And in the conclusion of his letter he says, "Smite me friendly and reprove me. It shall be a precious balm; it shall not break my head. I am deeply convinced that I know noth-

ing yet, as I ought to know. Fourteen years ago, I said with Mr. Norris,* I want heat more than light: but now I know not which I want most. Perhaps God will enlighten me by your words. O speak and spare not. At least you will have the thanks and prayers of, your obliged and affectionate servant, JOHN WESLEY."

John Smith, for so we must call him for the sake of distinction, prefaces his second letter in the following manner; "I heartily thank you for your very kind and very handsome letter. I have yielded it that attention which I think it justly deserves; and am now sat down to give you my thoughts upon it. I shall first most readily take notice of those things wherein I stand corrected, and am gone over to you: and next I shall, with some reluctance, proceed to those in which we seem unfortunately to differ."—But though he yielded up several things to Mr. Wesley, in whole or in part, yet he pressed him very hard on one or two points of doctrine; and I think his objections had afterwards some influence on Mr. Wesley's mind.—I am obliged to a friend for the copies of these letters, with liberty to make any use of them I might think proper. There are six on each side, written with ability and spirit. I think Mr. Wesley's opinions will admit of more illustration, and clearer evidence, than he has given them in this controversy. He himself afterwards, stated some points to much greater advantage. I should therefore be sorry to see these letters published without occasional remarks, by some person who thoroughly understands the subjects therein discussed. They are too long to be inserted here, as they would fill, at least, one fourth part of the volume.

Mr. Wesley continued his labors with the same zeal and diligence, through the most distant parts of the kingdom during the year 1746. Methodism spread rapidly on every side: the societies flourished, and the people increased in number, and in knowledge and love of the

* John Norris, the person here mentioned, was born in 1657, at Collingborne-Kingston, in Wiltshire, where his father was then minister. He was a learned divine, and Platonic philosopher. He was educated first at Winchester-School, and in 1676, sent to Oxford. In 1680, he was elected Fellow of All-Souls, soon after he had taken his degree of bachelor of arts. In 1684, he commenced master of arts; and the same year opened a correspondence with the learned mystic divine Dr. Henry More, of Christ's College in Cambridge. He had also a correspondence with the learned Lady Masham, Dr. Cudworth's daughter, and the ingenious Mrs. Astel. In 1691, his distinguished merit procured him the rectory of Bemerton, near Sarum. This living, upwards of two hundred pounds a year, was a comfortable provision for his family, and the easiness of the parochial duty, gave him leisure to pursue his favorite studies. He died in 1711. Mr. Norris published two octavo volumes on, "The Theory of the Ideal World." In this work he opposed Locke, and adorned Malebranche's opinion, of seeing all things in God, with all the advantages of style and perspicuity of expression. His philosophical errors may easily be pardoned on account of the general excellence of his writings, especially on subjects of practical divinity, which are universally esteemed. Mr. Wesley published extracts from two of his works, "A Treatise on Christian Prudence," and "Reflections on the Conduct of Human Life." No person can read these, without reaping advantage; and young persons ought to study them with diligence and attention.

truth. At this period the lay-preachers were not of that class of men who have been blessed with opportunities of improving their minds by an early education, or much reading. In general their knowledge extended not beyond the first principles of religion, and the practical consequences deducible from them; "Repentance towards God, faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ;" and the fruits that follow, "Righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." These were the subjects of their daily discourses, in which there was little variety. But such was the low state of religious knowledge among the people, that they were not prepared for anything higher. It was absolutely necessary to make them well acquainted with first principles, and to give these principles a practical influence on the heart and life, before they were led any further. In these circumstances the limited knowledge of the preachers, was so far from being an inconvenience, that it was an unspeakable advantage; as it necessarily confined them to those fundamental points of experimental and practical religion, which were best adapted to the state of the people. Preachers of education, and diversified knowledge, seldom dwell sufficiently in their sermons on these important points; and hence the lay-preachers were far more successful in awakening sinners to a sense of their dangerous state, and in bringing them to a saving knowledge of Christ, than other preachers of much more cultivated minds. To enforce the necessity of repentance, and of seeking salvation by grace alone through a Redeemer, the preacher would often draw a picture of human nature in such strong and natural colors, that every one who heard him saw his own likeness in it, and was ready to say, he hath shown me all that was in my heart. The effect was surprising. The people found themselves under every discourse, emerging out of the thickest darkness into a region of light; the blaze of which being suddenly poured in upon them, gave exquisite pain at first, but soon showed them the way to peace and consolation. Mr. Wesley foresaw, that as knowledge was increased among the people, it ought to be increased in the same, or even in a greater proportion among the preachers; otherwise they would become less useful, and in the end be despised. He therefore began to think of a collection of such books in the English language, as might forward their improvement in treating of the various branches of practical divinity. He seemed conscious, that the plan of his own education, and the prejudices he had early imbibed against the non-conformists of the last century, had shut him out from the knowledge of many writings which possibly might be very useful on this occasion. This induced him to request Dr. Doddridge, with whom he had a friendly correspondence, to give him a list of such books as he might think proper for the improvement of young preachers. March 15, the Doctor wrote to him, apologizing for the delay in complying with his request. "I am quite grieved," says he, "and ashamed, that any hurry, public

or private, should have prevented my answering your very obliging letter from Newcastle; especially as it has a face of disrespect, where I am sure I ought to express the very reverse, if I would do justice either to you, or my own heart. But you have been used to forgive greater injuries.

"I have been reading (I will not pretend to tell you with what strong emotion) the fourth edition of your Further Appeals: concerning which, I shall only say, that I have written upon the title-page, 'How forcible are RIGHT WORDS.' I am daily hurried by my printer, to finish the third volume of my Family Expositor. And I have unwillingly, a secular affair on my hands, in consequence of a guardianship, which calls me away from my usual business for some days next week: on which account I must beg your patience for a little while longer, as to the list of books you desire me to send you. But if God permit, you shall be sure to have it in a few weeks.

"I lately published a Thanksgiving Sermon, for the retreat of the rebels, which if you think worth calling for, at Mr. Waugh's, at the Turk's-Head in Gracechurch-Street, I shall desire you to accept. I was willing to greet the first openings of mercy; and so much the rather, as I think with Lord Somerville, who first made the reflection in one of his letters; that, had the blow at Falkirk been pursued, our whole army had been destroyed. The wisest and best of men, I know, agree to fear: oh! that they could also agree in their efforts to save! I trust I can call God to record on my soul, that to bring sinners to believe in Christ, and universally to obey him from a principle of grateful love, is the reigning desire of my heart, and has been the main business of my life. But alas, that it is so unsuccessful a labor! Yet, God knows, that could I have foreseen only the tenth part of that little success I seem to have had, I would have preferred the ministry, with ten times the labors and sorrows I have gone through in it, to any other employment or situation in life. I shall not forget Colonel Gardener's words, speaking of a much despised and persecuted, but very useful minister, 'I had rather be that man, than emperor of the world!'

"But I must conclude. May God, even your own God, continue to increase all his blessings on your head, heart, and labors; and may he sometimes lead you to remember in your prayers,

"Reverend and dear sir,

"Your affectionate brother and servant,

"P. DODDRIDGE.

P. S. "I presume the list you desire is chiefly theological. Perhaps my desire of making it too particular, has hindered me from setting about it, till I had a leisure time, which I have not yet found. But under the impression your book made upon me, I could not delay writing one post longer. Let me know in one word, how you do, what your success is, and what your apprehensions are. I fear we must have some hot flame to melt us."

The reader will recollect, that this letter was written in the time of the last rebellion, when the nation was thrown into the greatest consternation. June 18, Dr. Doddridge sent the list of books which Mr. Wesley had requested,* and the next day wrote to him as follows: "I send this by way of postscript, to thank you for the entertaining account you gave me of that very extraordinary turn which affairs took in the battle of Falkirk.—I perceive our rebel enemies were as confident of victory as possible, just before the action at Culloden, which proved so fatal to them. A friend of mine from thence, brings word, that just as the armies joined, an officer was sent back to make proclamation at the Market-Cross, at Inverness, that every householder should bake a bushel of bread, that it might be ready to refresh the prince's victorious army on its return; which was required on pain of military execution. The consequence of this was, that our army found much better provision for their refreshment after the fatigue of that glorious day, than they could otherwise have done. I have also reason to believe, that a day or two before this action, Lord Kilmarnock, having quartered himself and some of his chief officers, at a minister's house of the Scotch established church, in those parts, obliged the master of the house and his eldest son, to wait upon them at table, and in a profane manner undertook to say grace himself; which was, 'May God d—n and confound all Presbyterian parsons, their wives, and children and families henceforth and for evermore. Amen.'†—It is not to be wondered, that such a deliverance after such circumstances as these, should make a strong impression on the mind of ministers and people in general, which I am assured it does. I heartily pray God the impression may be lasting and produce that reformation which is so much needed among them as well as amongst us.

"I shall not be at all surprised, if the next winter should open upon us a much more afflictive scene than the last, if we will not be reformed by such judgments and deliverances as these. Yet I think with you, dear sir, that God will not make a full end of us. I look upon every sinner converted from the error of his ways, by the power of God working in his gospel, as a token for good, that we shall not be utterly forsaken.

"I am, dear sir,

"Most faithfully and affectionately yours,

"P. Doddridge."

In the latter end of December, Mr. Wesley received the following observations in a letter from a friend. No doubt the writer thought

* The letter is too long to be inserted here: it is printed in the first volume of the Arminian Magazine.

† After the rebels were dispersed, Lord Kilmarnock was apprehended, deprived of all his honors, and executed on the scaffold; but not before he had well deserved it. His son who served in the king's army, afterwards succeeded to the Earldom of Errol, a title much more ancient and honorable than that of Kilmarnock.

them necessary at that time, and they will not be out of season at present. "The knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures of Truth," says he, "I take to be of the last importance, and is what real Christians need as much to have their attention awakened unto, as the generality of those who are called by the christian name need to be taught that they are dead while they have a name to live.

"The understanding of the true meaning and intent of the Scriptures, is understanding the mind of God in every place. And he who opens that does more, and so to speak, gives more opportunity unto the Spirit of God to operate in the heart by his own word, than he who says abundance of serious things which are not contained in the subject (the text) he discourses from. In the other way, a man may preach numbers of years unto a congregation, and never explain the direct meaning of the Holy Spirit in one Scripture; meanwhile he is not increasing their knowledge in the word of God.—The word of God is that by which the Holy Ghost influences the heart of a believer; and I cannot think it sufficient for the carrying on of that work, that Christians be taught a few general truths, which possibly by frequent teaching they may acquire some distinct notion of, without ever seeing them in the Scripture in their genuine beauty and dress. And do not all foolish and injudicious clamors about orthodoxy and heresy, arise from this?

"I apprehend the Scriptures contain a more glorious, beautiful, and various display of the eternal God, than the inconceivable variety in nature gives us of this creation, which is his work. And I would have all Christians search the Scriptures, and study God there, with as much assiduity as the naturalists do nature in his material works. What infinite reward of enjoyment would arise from thence? It is true indeed, a head-knowledge of these things is nothing. The Spirit of God must make the heart sensible of all that our understandings can comprehend in revelation. But these are two distinct things which God hath joined together: even as the power of God in raising up Christ from the dead, is one thing to be understood and believed from the Scriptures; and the quickening of a sinner, is a work actually performed in the heart by the Spirit of Christ, but is inseparable from the faith of the former. This is it which makes the understanding I speak of so necessary; for without it a person shall never be able to judge by the word of God, of what passes within himself: for it is the only standard by which to try the spirits, and to prove every man's work.

"Serious people are generally in danger of regarding only what they feel in themselves, when their affections are lively and they receive great consolation from a belief of the love of God in Christ. They take that for the knowledge of God, which is only the effect of it. Consequently they are in hazard of seeking the knowledge of God in their own feelings, and of measuring their knowledge by them:

not attending, that our nourishment is not from within ourselves, but comes from without. It is God's whole glory displayed in revelation (by Christ) communicated by the Holy Ghost, received by faith, which ought to be the Christian's daily bread."

These observations are certainly of importance to those who know any thing of experimental religion: who are desirous to increase in the knowledge and love of God, and to have their experience built on a foundation that cannot be shaken. The gentleman who made them, had mentioned his thoughts on the subject to Mr. Wesley in conversation, who desired him to put them down in writing more at length, which gave birth to the letter of which the above is an abstract.

Mr. Wesley continued his frequent visits to the most distant parts of the kingdom. No season of the year, no change of weather, could either prevent or retard his journies. He generally preached two or three times every day, and regulated the societies wherever he came. His whole heart was in the work, and his fixed resolution surmounted every difficulty. In February, 1747, being in Yorkshire, he met with a clergyman, who told him, some of the preachers had frequently preached in his parish; and his judgment was, 1. That their preaching had done some good, but more harm. Because 2. Those who had attended it, had only turned from one wickedness to another; they had only exchanged sabbath-breaking, swearing or drunkenness, for slandering, backbiting, and evil speaking: and 3. Those who did not attend it, were provoked hereby to return evil for evil. So that the former were, in effect, no better, the latter worse than before.

"The same objection, in substance," says Mr. Wesley, "has been made in most other parts of England. It therefore deserves a serious answer, which will equally hold in all places. It is allowed, 1. That our preaching has done some good; common swearers, sabbath-breakers, drunkards, thieves, fornicators, having been reclaimed from those outward sins. But it is affirmed, 2. That it has done more harm: the persons so reclaimed, only changing one wickedness for another: and their neighbors being so provoked thereby, as to become worse than they were before.

"Those who have left their outward sins, you affirm, have only changed drunkenness or sabbath-breaking for backbiting or evil-speaking. I answer, if you affirm this of them all, it is notoriously false: many we can name, who left cursing, swearing, backbiting, drunkenness, and evil-speaking altogether, and who are to this day, just as fearful of slandering, as they are of cursing or swearing. And if some are not yet enough aware of this snare of the devil, we may hope they will be ere long. Meantime bless God for what he has done, and pray that he would deliver them from this death also.

"You affirm further, 'That their neighbors are provoked hereby,

to return evil for evil; and so while the former are no better, the latter are worse than they were before.'

"I answer, 1. 'These are worse than they were before.' But why? Because they do fresh despite to the spirit of grace: because they despise that long-suffering love of God which would lead them as it does their neighbors, to repentance. And in laying the blame of this on those who will no longer run with them to the same excess of riot, they only fulfil the Scriptures, and fill up the measure of their own iniquity.

"I answer, 2. There is still no proportion at all between the good on the one hand, and the harm on the other: for they who reject the goodness of God, were servants of the devil before; and they are but servants of the devil still. But they who accept it, are brought from the power of satan, to serve the living and true God."

In April, Mr. Wesley, on his return from the North, spent an hour with the same clergyman, and pressed him to make good his assertion, that the preaching of the Methodists had done more harm than good. This he did not choose to pursue; but enlarged on the harm it might occasion in succeeding generations. Mr. Wesley adds, "I cannot see the force of this argument. I dare not neglect the doing certain present good, for fear of some probable ill consequences, in the succeeding century."

June 4. Mr. Wesley wrote down the following instructions for the stewards of the society in London.

1. "You are to be men full of the Holy Ghost, and of wisdom; that you may do all things in a manner acceptable to God.—2. You are to be present every Tuesday and Thursday morning, in order to transact the temporal affairs of the society.—3. You are to begin and end every meeting with earnest prayer to God, for a blessing on all your undertakings.—4. You are to produce your accounts the first Tuesday in every month, that they may be transcribed into the ledger.—5. You are to take it in turn, month by month, to be chairman. The chairman is to see that all the rules be punctually observed, and immediately to check him who breaks any of them.—6. You are to do nothing without the consent of the minister, either actually had, or reasonably presumed.—7. You are to consider whenever you meet, 'God is here.' Therefore, be serious. Utter no trifling word. Speak as in his presence, and to the glory of his great name.—8. When any thing is debated, let one at once stand up and speak, the rest giving attention. And let him speak just loud enough to be heard, in love and in the spirit of meekness.—9. You are continually to pray and endeavor, that a holy harmony of soul may in all things subsist among you: that in every step, you may keep the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace.—10. In all debates, you are to watch over your spirits, avoiding as fire, all clamor and contention, being swift to hear, slow to speak; in honor every man preferring another before

himself.—11. If you cannot relieve, do not grieve the poor. Give them soft words, if nothing else. Abstain from either sour looks, or harsh words. Let them be glad to come, even though they should go empty away. Put yourselves in the place of every poor man. And deal with them as you would God should deal with you.

These instructions, we whose names are underwritten (being the present stewards of the society in London,) do heartily receive, and earnestly desire to conform to. In witness whereof, we have set our hands.—N. B. If any steward shall break any of the preceding rules after having been thrice admonished by the chairman (whereof notice is to be immediately given to the minister) he is no longer steward."

June 15. The fourth conference began, and ended on Saturday the 20th. The minutes of the several conferences were now collected together, and printed: a summary of which, respecting doctrines agreed upon, I shall here subjoin.

After some time spent in prayer at the first conference, the design of the meeting was proposed; namely to consider, 1. What to teach; 2. How to teach; and, 3. What to do? That is, how to regulate their doctrine, discipline, and practice. The meeting being thus opened, they proceeded as follows:

"It is desired, that all things be considered as in the immediate presence of God: that me may meet with a single eye, and as little children who have every thing to learn.

"That every point which is proposed, may be examined to the foundation: that every person may speak freely whatever is in his heart: and that every question which may arise, should be thoroughly debated and settled. Meantime let us all pray for a willingness to receive light: to know of every doctrine, whether it be of God.

"Question 1. How may the time of this Conference, be made more eminently a time of watching unto prayer?

"Ans. 1. While we are conversing, let us have an especial care to set God always before us. 2. In the intermediate hours, let us visit none but the sick, and spend all the time that remains in retirement. 3. Let us give ourselves to prayer for one another, and for a blessing on this our labor.

"*Q.* 2. How far does each of us agree to submit to the judgment of the majority?

"*A.* In speculative things, each can only submit so far as his judgment shall be convinced: in every practical point, each will submit so far as he can without wounding his conscience.

"*Q.* 3. Can a Christian submit any further than this to any man, or number of men upon earth?

"*A.* It is plain he cannot, either to Bishop, Convocation, or general Council. And this is that general principle of private judgment,

on which all the reformers proceeded; 'Every man must judge for himself, because every man must give an account of himself to God.'

They now proceeded to consider the doctrine of Justification: the questions relating to which, and the substance of the answers given thereto, were as follows:

I. *Q.* 1. "What is it to be justified?

A. "To be pardoned and received into God's favor; into such a state, that if we continue therein, we shall be finally saved.

Q. 2. "Is faith the condition of justification?

A. "Yes; for every one who believeth not is condemned; and every one who believes is justified.

Q. 3. "But must not repentance and works meet for repentance go before this faith?

A. "Without doubt: if by repentance you mean conviction of sin; and by works meet for repentance, obeying God as far as we can, forgiving our brother, leaving off from evil, doing good and using his ordinances according to the power we have received.

Q. 4. "What is Faith?

A. "Faith in general is a divine, supernatural *elenchos* of things not seen; *i. e.* of past, future, or spiritual things: it is a spiritual sight of God and the things of God.

"First, a sinner is convinced by the Holy Ghost, 'Christ loved me and gave himself for me.'—This is that faith by which he is justified or pardoned, the moment he receives it. Immediately the same spirit bears witness, 'Thou art pardoned: thou hast redemption in his blood'—And this is saving faith, whereby the love of God is shed abroad in his heart.

Q. 5. "Have all Christians this faith? May not a man be justified and not know it?

A. "That all true Christians have such a faith as implies an assurance of God's love, appears from Rom. viii. 15. Eph. iv. 32. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Heb. viii. 10. 1 John iv. 10; v. 19. And that no man can be justified and not know it, appears further from the nature of the thing. For faith after repentance is ease after pain, rest after toil, light after darkness. It appears also from the immediate, as well as distant fruits thereof.

Q. 6. "But may not a man go to heaven without it?

A. "It does not appear from holy writ that a man who hears the gospel, can: (Mark xvi. 16:) whatever a Heathen may do. Rom. ii. 14.

Q. 7. "What are the immediate fruits of justifying faith?

A. "Peace, joy, love, power over all outward sin, and power to keep down inward sin.

Q. 8. "Does any one believe, who has not the witness in himself, or any longer than he sees, loves, and obeys God?

A. "We apprehend not; seeing God being the very essence of faith; love and obedience the inseparable properties of it.

Q. 9 "What sins are consistent with justifying faith?

A. "No wilful sin. If a believer wilfully sins, he casts away his faith. Neither is it possible he should have justifying faith again, without previously repenting.

Q. 10. "*Must* every believer come into a state of doubt or fear, or darkness? Will he do so, unless by ignorance or unfaithfulness? Does God otherwise withdraw himself?

A. "It is certain, a believer, *need* never again come into condemnation. It seems, he need not come into a state of doubt or fear, or darkness: and that (ordinarily at least) he will not, unless by ignorance or unfaithfulness. Yet it is true, that the first joy does seldom last long: that it is commonly followed by doubts and fears; and that God frequently permits great heaviness, before any large manifestation of himself.

Q. 11. "Are works necessary to the continuance of faith?

A. "Without doubt; for a man may forfeit the free gift of God, either by sins of omission or commission.

Q. 12. "Can faith be lost, but for want of works?

A. "It cannot but through disobedience.

Q. 13. "How is faith made perfect by works?

A. "The more we exert our faith, the more it is increased. To him that hath shall be given.

Q. 14. "St. Paul says, Abraham was not justified by works. St. James, he was justified by works. Do they not contradict each other?

A. "No: 1. Because they do not speak of the same justification. St. Paul speaks of that justification which was when Abraham was seventy-five years old, above twenty years before Isaac was born. St. James of that justification which was when he offered up Isaac on the altar.

2dly. "Because they do not speak of the same works. St. Paul speaking of works that precede faith: St. James of works that spring from it.

Q. 15. "In what sense is Adam's sin imputed to all mankind?

A. "In Adam all die, i. e. 1. Our bodies then became mortal. 2. Our souls died, i. e. were disunited from God. And hence, 3. We are all born with a sinful devilish nature: by reason whereof, 4. We are children of wrath, liable to death eternal. Rom. v. 18. Eph. ii. 3.

Q. 16. "In what sense is the righteousness of Christ imputed to all mankind, or to believers?

A. "We do not find it expressly affirmed in Scripture, that God imputes the righteousness of Christ to any. Although we do find, that faith is imputed to us for righteousness.

"That text, 'As by one man's disobedience all men were made sin-

ners, so by the obedience of one, all were made righteous,' we conceive means, by the merits of Christ, all men are cleared from the guilt of Adam's actual sin.

"We conceive further, That through the obedience and death of Christ, 1. The bodies of all men become immortal after the resurrection. 2. Their souls receive a capacity of spiritual life; and, 3. An actual spark or seed thereof. 4. All believers become children of grace, reconciled to God, and 5. made partakers of the divine nature.

Q. 17. "Have we not then unawares leaned too much towards Calvinism?

A. "We are afraid we have.

Q. 18. "Have we not also leaned towards Antinomianism?

A. "We are afraid we have.

Q. 19. "What is Antinomianism?

A. "The doctrine which makes void the law through faith?

Q. 20. "What are the main pillars hereof?

A. 1. "That Christ abolished the moral law. 2. That therefore Christians are not obliged to observe it. 3. That one branch of Christian liberty, is liberty from obeying the commandments of God. 4. That it is bondage, to do a thing, because it is commanded, or forbear it because it is forbidden. 5. That a believer is not obliged to use the ordinances of God or to do good works. 6. That a preacher ought not to exhort to good works: not unbelievers, because it is hurtful; not believers, because it is needless.

Q. 21. "What was the occasion of St. Paul's writing his Epistle to the Galatians?

A. "The coming of certain men amongst the Galatians, who taught, Except ye be circumcised and keep the law of Moses ye cannot be saved.

Q. 22. "What is the main design therein?

A. "To prove, 1. That no man can be justified or saved by the works of the law, either moral or ritual. 2. That every believer is justified by faith in Christ without the works of the law.

Q. 23. "What does he mean by the works of the law? Gal. ii. 16, &c.

A. "All works which do not spring from faith in Christ.

Q. 24. "What by being under the law? Gal. iii. 23.

A. "Under the Mosaic dispensation.

Q. 25. "What law has Christ abolished?

A. "The ritual law of Moses.

Q. 26. "What is meant by liberty? Gal. v. 1.

A. "Liberty, 1. From the law; 2. From sin."

II. *Q.* 1. "How comes what is written on this subject* to be so intricate and obscure? Is this obscurity from the nature of the thing

* *i. e.* on justification.

itself? Or, from the fault or weakness of those who have generally treated of it?

A. "We apprehend this obscurity does not arise from the nature of the subject: but, partly from the extreme warmth of most writers who have treated of it.

Q. 2. "We affirm faith in Christ is the sole condition of justification. But does not repentance go before that faith? Yea, and (supposing there be opportunity for them) fruits or works meet for repentance?

A. "Without doubt they do.

Q. 3. "How then can we deny them to be conditions of justification? Is not this a mere strife of words?

A. "It seems not, though it has been grievously abused. But so the abuse cease, let the use remain.

Q. 4. "Shall we read over together Mr. Baxter's aphorisms concerning justification?

A. "By all means: which were accordingly read. And it was desired, that each person present would in the afternoon consult the Scriptures cited therein, and bring what objections might occur the next morning.

Q. 5. "Is an assurance of God's pardoning love absolutely necessary to our being in his favor? Or may there possibly be some exempt cases?

A. "We dare not positively say, there are not.

Q. 6. "Is such an assurance absolutely necessary to inward and outward holiness?

A. "To inward, we apprehend it is: to outward holiness, we incline to think it is not.

Q. 7. "Is it indispensably necessary to final salvation?

A. "Love hopeth all things. We know not how far any may fall under the case of invincible ignorance.

Q. 8. "But what can we say of one of our own society, who dies without it, as J. W. at London?

A. "It may possibly be an exempt case, (if the fact was really so.) But we determine nothing. We leave his soul in the hands of him that made it.

Q. 9. "Does a man believe any longer than he sees a reconciled God?

A. "We conceive not. But we allow there may be infinite degrees in seeing God: even as many as there are between him who sees the sun, when it shines on his eye-lids closed, and him who stands with his eyes wide open, in the full blaze of his beams.

Q. 10. "Does a man believe any longer than he loves God?

A. "In no wise. For neither circumcision or uncircumcision avails, without faith working by love.

Q. 11. "Have we duly considered the case of Cornelius? Was not he in the favor of God, when his prayers and alms came up for a memorial before God? i. e., before he believed in Christ?

A. "It does seem that he was, in some degree. But we speak not of those who have not heard the gospel.

Q. 12. "But were those works of his splendid sins?

A. "No; nor were they done without the grace of Christ.

Q. 13. "How then can we maintain, that all works done before we have a sense of the pardoning love of God, are sin? And, as such, an abomination to him?

A. "The works of him who has heard the gospel, and does not believe, are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done. And yet we know not how to say, that they are an abomination to the Lord in him who feareth God, and from that principle, does the best he can.

Q. 14. "Seeing there is so much difficulty in this subject, can we deal too tenderly with them that oppose us?

A. "We cannot; unless we were to give up any part of the truth of God.

Q. 15. "Is a believer constrained to obey God?

A. "At first he often is. The love of Christ constraineth him. After this, he may obey, or he may not; no constraint being laid upon him.

Q. 16. "Can faith be lost, but through disobedience?

A. "It cannot. A believer first inwardly disobeys, inclines to sin with his heart: then his intercourse with God is cut off, i. e. his faith is lost. And after this, he may fall into outward sin, being now weak, and like another man.

Q. 17. "How can such an one recover faith?

A. "By repenting and doing the first works. Rev. ii. 5.

Q. 18. "Whence is it that so great a majority of those who believe fall more or less into doubt or fear?

A. "Chiefly from their own ignorance or unfaithfulness: often from their not watching unto prayer; perhaps sometimes from some defect, or want of the power of God in the preaching they hear.

Q. 19. "Is there not a defect in us? Do we preach as we did at first? Have we not changed our doctrines?

A. 1. "At first we preached almost wholly to unbelievers. To those therefore we spake almost continually, of remission of sins through the death of Christ, and the nature of faith in his blood. And so we do still, among those who need to be taught the first elements of the gospel of Christ:

2. "But those in whom the foundation is already laid, we exhort to go on to perfection: which we did not see so clearly at first; although we occasionally spoke of it from the beginning.

3. "Yet we now preach, and that continually, faith in Christ, as

the prophet, priest, and king, at least, as clearly, as strongly, and as fully, as we did six years ago.

Q. 20. "Do not some of our assistants preach too much of the wrath, and too little of the love of God?

A. "We fear they have leaned to that extreme; and hence some of their hearers may have lost the joy of faith?

Q. 21. "Need we ever preach the terrors of the Lord to those who know they are accepted of him?

A. "No; it is folly so to do; for love is to them the strongest of all motives.

Q. 22. "Do we ordinarily represent a justified state so great and happy as it is?

A. "Perhaps not. A believer walking in the light, is inexpressibly great and happy.

Q. 23. "Should we not have a care of depreciating justification, in order to exalt the state of full sanctification?

A. "Undoubtedly we should beware of this: for one may insensibly slide into it.

Q. 24. "How shall we effectually avoid it?

A. "When we are going to speak of entire sanctification, let us first describe the blessings of a justified state, as strongly as possible.

Q. 25. "Does not the truth of the gospel lie very near both to Calvinism and Antinomianism?

A. "Indeed it does: as it were, within a hair's breadth. So that it is altogether foolish and sinful, because we do not quite agree either with one or the other, to run from them as far as ever we can.

Q. 26. "Wherein may we come to the very edge of Calvinism?

A. "In ascribing all good to the free grace of God: 2. In denying all natural free will, and all power antecedent to grace; and 3. In excluding all merit from man; even for what he has or does by the grace of God.

Q. 27. "Wherein may we come to the edge of Antinomianism?

A. 1. "In exalting the merits and love of Christ. 2. In rejoicing evermore.

Q. 28. "Does faith supersede (set aside the necessity of) holiness or good works?

A. "In no wise. So far from it that it implies both, as a cause does its effects."

III. *Q.* 1. "Can an unbeliever (whatever he be in other respects) challenge anything of God's justice?

A. "Absolutely nothing but hell. And this is a point which we cannot too much insist on.

Q. 2. "Do we empty men of their own righteousness, as we did at first? Do we sufficiently labor, when they begin to be convinced of sin, to take away all they lean upon? Should we not then endeavor with all our might to everturn their false foundations?

A. "This was at first one of our principal points. And it ought to be so still. For, till all other foundations are overturned, they cannot build upon Christ.

Q. 3. "Did we not *then* purposely throw them into convictions? Into strong sorrow and fear? Nay, did we not strive to make them inconsolable? Refusing to be comforted?

A. "We did. And so we should do still. For the stronger the conviction, the speedier is the deliverance. And none so soon receive the peace of God, as those who steadily refuse all other comfort.

Q. 4. "What is sincerity?

A. "Willingness to know and do the whole will of God. The lowest species thereof seems to be faithfulness in that which is little.

Q. 5. "Has God any regard to man's sincerity?

A. "So far, that no man in any state can possibly please God without it; neither indeed in any moment wherein he is not sincere.

Q. 6. "But can it be conceived that God has any regard to the sincerity of an unbeliever?

A. "Yes, so much, that if he perseveres therein, God will infallibly give him faith.

Q. 7. "What regard may we conceive him to have, to the sincerity of a believer?

A. "So much, that in every sincere believer he fulfils all the great and precious promises.

Q. 8. "Whom do you term a sincere believer?

A. "One that walks in the light, as God is in the light.

Q. 9. "Is sincerity the same with a single eye?

A. "Not altogether. The latter refers to our intention; the former to our will or desires.

Q. 10. "Is it not all in all?

A. "All will follow persevering sincerity. God gives everything with it; nothing without it.

Q. 11. "Are not then sincerity and faith equivalent terms?

A. "By no means. It is at least as nearly related to works as it is to faith. For example; Who is sincere before he believes? He that then does all he can: he that, according to the power he has received, brings forth 'fruits meet for repentance.' Who is sincere after he believes? He that, from a sense of God's love, is zealous of all good works.

Q. 12. "Is not sincerity what St. Paul terms a willing mind? ἡ προθυμία? 2 Cor. viii. 12.

A. "Yes: if that word be taken in a general sense. For it is a constant disposition to use all the grace given.

Q. 13. "But do we not then set sincerity on a level with faith?

A. "No. For we allow a man may be sincere, and not be justified, as he may be penitent, and not be justified: (not as yet) but he cannot have faith, and not be justified. The very moment he believes he is justified.

Q. 14. "But do we not give up faith, and put sincerity in its place, as the condition of our acceptance with God?

A. "We believe it is one condition of our acceptance, as repentance likewise is. And we believe it a condition of our continuing in a state of acceptance. Yet we do not put it in the place of faith. It is by faith the merits of Christ are applied to my soul. But if I am not sincere, they are not applied.

Q. 15. "Is not this that going about to establish your own righteousness, whereof St. Paul speaks, Rom. x. 4?

A. "St. Paul there manifestly speaks of unbelievers, who sought to be accepted for the sake of their own righteousness. We do not seek to be accepted for the sake of our sincerity; but through the merits of Christ alone. Indeed, so long as any man believes, he cannot go about (in St. Paul's sense) 'to establish his own righteousness.'

Q. 16. "But do you consider, that we are under the covenant of grace? And that the covenant of works is now abolished?

A. "All mankind were under the covenant of grace from the very hour that the original promise was made. If by the covenant of works you mean, that of unsinning obedience made with Adam before the fall: no man, but Adam, was ever under that covenant: for it was abolished before Cain was born. Yet it is not so abolished, but that it will stand, in a measure, even to the end of the world, i. e. if we do this, we shall live; if not, we shall die eternally; if we do well, we shall live with God in glory: if evil, we shall die the second death. For every man shall be judged in that day, and rewarded according to his works.

Q. 17. "What means then, 'to him that believeth, his faith is counted for righteousness'?

A. "That God forgives him that is unrighteous as soon as he believes, accepting his faith instead of perfect righteousness. But then observe, universal righteousness follows, though it did not precede faith.

Q. 18. "But is faith thus counted to us for righteousness, at whatsoever time we believe?

A. "Yes. In whatsoever moment we believe, all our past sins vanish away. They are as though they had never been, and we stand clear in the sight of God.

Q. 19. "Are not the assurance of faith, the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and the revelation of Christ in us, terms nearly of the same import?

A. "He that denies one of them, must deny all; they are so closely connected together.

Q. 20. "Are they ordinarily, where the pure gospel is preached, essential to our acceptance?

A. "Undoubtedly they are; and as such, to be insisted on, in the strongest terms.

Q. 21. "Is not the whole dispute of salvation by faith, or by works, a mere strife of words?

A. "In asserting salvation by faith, we mean this; 1. That pardon (salvation begun) is received by faith, producing works. 2. That holiness (salvation continued) is faith working by love. 3. That heaven (salvation finished) is the reward of this faith.

"If you who assert salvation by works, or by faith and works, mean the same thing (understanding by faith, the revelation of Christ in us, by salvation, pardon, holiness, glory,) we will not strive with you at all. If you do not, this is not a strife of words: but the very vitals, the essence of Christianity is the thing in question.

Q. 22. "Wherein does our doctrine now differ from that we preached while at Oxford?

A. "Chiefly in these two points: 1. We then knew nothing of that righteousness of faith, in justification; nor 2. Of the nature of faith itself, as implying consciousness of pardon.

Q. 23. "May not some degree of the love of God, go before a distinct sense of justification?

A. "We believe it may.

Q. 24. "Can any degree of sanctification or holiness?

A. "Many degrees of outward holiness may: yea, and some degrees of meekness, and several other tempers which would be branches of Christian holiness, but that they do not spring from Christian principles. For the abiding love of God cannot spring, but from faith in a pardoning God. And no true Christian holiness can exist, without that love of God for its foundation.

Q. 25. "Is every man, as soon as he believes, a new creature, sanctified, pure in heart? Has he then a new heart? Does Christ dwell therein? And is he a temple of the Holy Ghost?

A. "All these things may be affirmed of every believer, in a true sense. Let us not therefore contradict those who maintain it. Why should we contend about words?

IV. *Q.* 1. "How much is allowed by our brethren who differ from us, with regard to entire sanctification?

A. "They grant, 1. That every one must be entirely sanctified, in the article of death.

"2. That till then, a believer daily grows in grace, comes nearer and nearer to perfection.

"3. That we ought to be continually pressing after this, and to exhort all others so to do.

Q. 2. "What do we allow them?

A. "We grant, 1. That many of those who have died in the faith, yea, the greater part of those we have known, were not sanctified throughout, not made perfect in love till a little before death:

"2. That the term, 'sanctified' is continually applied by St. Paul, to all that were justified, were true believers:

"3. That by this term alone, he rarely (if ever) means saved from all sin.

"4. That consequently, it is not proper to use it in this sense, without adding the words, 'wholly, entirely,' or the like.

"5. That the inspired writers almost continually speak of or to those who were justified; but very rarely, either of or to those who were wholly sanctified.

"6. That consequently, it behoves us to speak in public almost continually of the state of justification: but more rarely, at least in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification.

Q. 3. "What then is the point wherein we divide?

A. "It is this: Whether we should expect to be saved from all sin, before the article of death?

Q. 4. "Is there any clear scripture promise of this? That God will save us from all sin?

A. "There is. Psalm cxxx. 8. 'He shall redeem Israel from all his sins.

"This is more largely expressed in the prophecy of Ezekiel: 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean; from *all* your filthiness, and from *all* your idols will I cleanse you—I will also save you from all your uncleannesses, c. xxxvi. v. 25, 29. No promise can be more clear. And to this the apostle plainly refers in that exhortation, 'Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves, from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' 2. Cor. vii. 1. Equally clear and express in that ancient promise, 'The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul.' Deut. xxx. 6.

Q. 5. But does any assertion answerable to this, occur in the New Testament?

A. "There does, and that laid down in the plainest terms. So St. John iii. 8. 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.' The works of the devil without any limitation or restriction: but all sin is the work of the devil. Parallel to which is that assertion of St. Paul, Eph. v. 25, 27. 'Christ loved the church and gave himself for it—that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.'

"And to the same effect is his assertion in the viiith of the Romans (v. 3, 4.) 'God sent his Son—that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, walking not after the flesh but after the spirit.'

Q. 6. "Does the New Testament afford any further ground, for expecting to be saved from all sin?

A. Undoubtedly it does, both in those prayers and commands which are equivalent to the strongest assertions.

Q. 7. "What prayers do you mean?

A. "Prayers for entire sanctification; which, were there no such thing, would be mere mockery of God. Such, in particular, are 1. Deliver us from evil; or rather, from the evil one. Now when this is done, when we are delivered from all evil, there can be no sin remaining. 2. 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.' John xvii. 20, 21, 23.

"3. 'I bow my knees unto the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ—that he would grant you—that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth and length and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.' Eph. iii. 14, 16—19. 4. 'The very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God, your whole spirit, soul and body, be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' 1 Thess. v. 23.

Q. 8. "What command is there to the same effect?

A. "'Be ye perfect as your father which is in heaven is perfect.' Matt. vi. ult.

"2. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.' Matt. xxii. 37. But if the love of God fill all the heart, there can be no sin there.

Q. 9. "But how does it appear that this is to be done before the article of death?

A. "First, from the very nature of a command, which is not given to the dead, but to the living.

"Therefore, 'Thou shalt love God with all thy heart,' cannot mean, Thou shalt do this when thou diest, but while thou livest.

"Secondly, from express texts of scripture:

"1. 'The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men; teaching as, that having renounced (ἀρνησάμενοι) ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world: looking for——the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity; and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' Tit. ii. 11—14.

"2. 'He hath raised up an horn of salvation for us—to perform the mercy promised to our fathers; the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, should serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. Luke i. 69, &c.

Q. 10. "Does not the harshly preaching perfection tend to bring believers into a kind of bondage or slavish fear?

A. "It does. Therefore we should always place it in the most amiable light, so that it may excite only hope, joy, and desire.

Q. 11. "Why may we not continue in the joy of faith even till we are made perfect?

A. "Why, indeed? Since holy grief does not quench this joy: since even while we are under the cross, while we deeply partake of the sufferings of Christ, we may rejoice with joy unspeakable.

Q. 12. "Do we not discourage believers from rejoicing evermore?

A. "We ought not so to do. Let them all their life long, rejoice unto God, so it be with reverence. And even if lightness or pride should mix with their joy, let us not strike at the joy itself (this is the gift of God) but at that lightness or pride, that the evil may cease and the good remain.

Q. 13. "Ought we to be anxiously careful about perfection? Lest we should die before we had attained?

A. "In no wise. We ought to be thus careful for nothing, neither spiritual nor temporal.

Q. 14. "But ought we not to be troubled, on account of the sinful nature which still remains in us?

A. "It is good for us to have a deep sense of this, and to be much ashamed before the Lord. But this should only incite us, the more earnestly to turn unto Christ every moment, and to draw light and life, and strength from him, that we may go on, conquering and to conquer. And therefore, when the sense of our sin most abounds, the sense of his love should much more abound.

Q. 15. "Will our joy or our trouble increase as we grow in grace?

A. "Perhaps both. But without doubt our joy in the Lord will increase as our love increases.

Q. 16. "Is not the teaching believers to be continually poring upon their inbred sin, the ready way to make them forget that they were purged from their former sins?

A. "We find by experience, it is; or to make them undervalue, and account it a little thing: whereas indeed (though there are still greater gifts behind) this is inexpressibly great and glorious."

The controversy with John Smith, now drew towards a conclusion: and here I shall state one particular in which I think it had some influence on Mr. Wesley's mind. Hitherto he had expressed his notion of justifying faith, in the words of the Church of England, in her Homily on salvation. That it is, A sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favor of God. But in July he seems to have examined the subject more closely, and wrote to his brother Charles, as follows:

"Dear Brother,

"Yesterday I was thinking on a *desideratum* among us, a *Genesis*

problematica on justifying faith. A skeleton of it (which you may fill up, or any one that has leisure) I have roughly set down.

"Is justifying faith a sense of pardon? *Negatur.*" It is denied.

1. "Every one is deeply concerned to understand this question well: but preachers most of all: lest they either make them sad whom God hath not made sad; or, encourage them to say peace, where there is no peace.

"Some years ago we heard nothing of justifying faith, or a sense of pardon: so that when we did hear of them, the theme was quite new to us; and we might easily, especially in the heat and hurry of controversy, lean too much either to the one hand or to the other.

II. "By justifying faith I mean, that faith, which whosoever hath not, is under the wrath and the curse of God. By a sense of pardon, I mean a distinct, explicit assurance that my sins are forgiven.

"I allow, 1. That there is such an explicit assurance. 2. That it is the common privilege of real Christians. 3. That it is the proper christian faith, which purifieth the heart, and overcometh the world.

"But I cannot allow, that justifying faith is such an assurance, or necessarily connected therewith.

III. "Because, if justifying faith necessarily implies such an explicit assurance of pardon, then every one who has it not, and every one so long as he has it not, is under the wrath and under the curse of God. But this is a supposition contrary to Scripture, as well as to experience.

"Contrary to Scripture: to Isaiah l. 10. 'Who is among you, that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.'

"Contrary to Acts x. 34. 'Of a truth I perceive, that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.'

"Contrary to experience: for J. R. &c. &c. had peace with God, no fear, no doubt, before they had that sense of pardon. And so have I frequently had.

"Again. The assertion, that justifying faith is a sense of pardon, is contrary to reason: it is flatly absurd. For how can a sense of our having received pardon, be the condition of our receiving it?

IV. "If you object, 1. 'J. T., St. Paul, &c. had this sense:' I grant they had; but they were justified before they had it.—2. 'We know fifteen hundred persons who have this assurance.' Perhaps so: but this does not prove, they were not justified till they received it.—3. 'We have been exceedingly blessed in preaching this doctrine.' We have been blessed in preaching the great truths of the gospel; although we tacked to them, in the simplicity of our hearts, a proposition which was not true. 4. 'But does not our church give this account of justifying faith?' I am sure she does of saving or christian faith: I

think she does of justifying faith too. But to the law and to the testimony. All men may err: but the word of the Lord shall stand forever."

In the spring and summer of this year, Mr. Wesley, and the preachers were invited into many parts of Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire, where they had not been before. Mr. John Bennet,* was a most indefatigable and successful laborer, for several years, in these parts of the country. He was a man of sound judgment, and of considerable abilities as a preacher. From a letter which he wrote to Mr. Wesley, sometime after this period, we may form some notion of the labors of the preachers. "Many doors," says he, "are opened for preaching in these parts, but cannot be suppled for want of preachers. I think some one should be sent to assist me, otherwise we shall lose ground.—My circuit is one hundred and fifty miles in two weeks; during which time I preach publicly thirty-four times, besides meeting the societies, visiting the sick, and transacting the temporal business. I think the above is too much for me, considering my weak constitution."

This was great labor; but Mr. Wesley, and his brother Mr. Charles, labored still more. They preached as often, did all the other business, and frequently travelled near treble the distance in the same space of time. Hitherto they had been enabled to labor, and form societies with the assistance of the other preachers, in most parts of England, though frequently at the peril of their lives: but now their line was stretched a little further. One of the lay-preachers had gone over to Dublin, and after preaching there for some time, formed a society.—He wrote an account of his success to Mr. Wesley, who determined to visit Ireland immediately. Accordingly, August 4, he set out from Bristol, and passing through Wales, arrived in Dublin on Sunday the 9th, about ten o'clock in the forenoon. Mr. Wesley observes, "Soon after we landed, hearing the bells ringing for church, I went thither directly.—About three I wrote a line to the curate of St. Mary's, who sent me word he should be glad of my assistance. So I preached there, another gentleman reading prayers, to as gay and senseless a congregation as ever I saw. After sermon Mr. R. thanked me very affectionately, and desired I would favor him with my company in the morning. Monday 10, Between eight and nine I went to Mr. R. the curate of St. Mary's: he professed abundance of good will, commended my sermon in strong terms, and begged he might see me again the next morning. But at the same time he expressed the most rooted prejudice against lay-preachers, or preaching out of a church; and said, the Archbishop of Dublin was resolved to suffer no such irregularities in his diocese."

In the course of the day Mr. Wesley went to wait on the archbishop;

* Father of the late Rev. Mr Bennet, minister to a congregation on the stones in Moorfields.

but he was gone out of town. The next day he waited upon him at New-Bridge, ten miles from Dublin. He had the favor of conversing with the archbishop two or three hours; in which time he answered abundance of objections. In the evening he returned to Mr. Lunell's, at whose house he was hospitably entertained.

On the 14th, Mr. Wesley observes, "I procured a genuine account of the great Irish massacre in 1641. Surely never was there such a transaction before, from the beginning of the world! More than two hundred thousand men, women, and children, butchered within a few months in cool blood; and with such circumstances of cruelty as makes one's blood run cold! It is well if God has not a controversy with the nation, on this very account to this day."—May the gracious Providence of God superintend our public affairs in such a way as may prevent the return of a like calamity.

Saturday the 15th, he staid at home, and spake to all who came to him. "But," says he, "I found scarce any Irish among them. At least ninety-nine in an hundred of the native Irish, remain in the religion of their forefathers. The Protestants, whether in Dublin or elsewhere, are almost all transplanted from England. Nor is it any wonder, that those who are born Papists, generally live and die such; when the Protestants can find no better ways to convert them, than penal laws and acts of parliament."—I never understood, that penal laws and acts of parliament, were intended as the means of converting the Papists; but as means of preventing, or hindering them from breaking the peace, from murdering their neighbors who think differently from them, and from making proselytes to opinions subversive of the government. The bulls of the Popes, their decretals, and the oaths of the Romish bishops, taken even at present, will not allow us to doubt for a moment, that principles subversive of every Protestant government, enter into the essence of every establishment of the Roman-Catholic* religion; and will infallibly produce their natural effects, as opportunities offer. And therefore the creed, or public professions of individuals in that church to the contrary, are of no avail; they ought to weigh nothing with the legislature in Protestant countres, until the Pope of Rome annul, abrogate, and totally disavow the bulls, and decretals, which infringe on the rights of kings, and of all civil governors; and change the oaths of the bishops acting under his authority.—But perhaps, Mr. Wesley intended no more, by the sentence quoted above, than a reproach either on the church or state, for not appointing proper methods of diffusing knowledge among the native Irish; most of whom are kept by their priests in a state of the grossest ignorance.

The house wherein they preached at this time, was originally designed for a Lutheran church, and contained about four hundred

* There never was a more indecent abuse of words, than in the Church of Rome assuming the title of the Catholic Church.

people: but abundantly more might stand in the yard. Mr. Wesley preached morning and evening to many more than the house could contain; and had more and more reason to hope, they would not all be unfruitful hearers. Monday the 17th, he began to examine the society, which contained about two hundred and fourscore members, many of whom had found peace with God. "The people in general," says Mr. Wesley, "are of a more teachable spirit than in most parts of England: but on that very account, they must be watched over with the more care, being equally susceptible of good and ill impressions."

Mr. Wesley proceeds. "Sunday the 23d, I began in the evening before the usual time; yet were a multitude of people got together, in the house, yard, and street: abundantly more than my voice could reach. I cried aloud to as many as could hear, 'All things are ready; come ye to the marriage.' Having delivered my message, about eleven I took ship for England, leaving J. Trembath, then a burning and a shining light, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, to water the seed which had been sown. Wednesday 26, about two in the afternoon we landed at Holyhead. Saturday 29, I preached at Garth, in Brecknockshire, in the evening, where I met my brother, in his way to Ireland."*—The remaining part of this year, Mr. Wesley spent in Bristol, London, Salisbury, and the neighboring places.

The following letter, written in November, may show us how careful Mr. Wesley was, to guard the preachers against a party spirit in their public labors. "My dear brother," says he, "in public preaching speak not one word against opinions of any kind. We are not to fight against notions, but sins. Least of all should I advise you, once to open your lips against predestination. It would do more mischief than you are aware of. Keep to our one point, present inward salvation by faith, by the divine evidence of sins forgiven."

At this time, the work of God ("It is no cant word," says Mr. Wesley, "it means the conversion of sinners from sin to holiness") was both widening and deepening, not only in London and Bristol, but in most parts of England; there being scarcely any county, and not many large towns, wherein there were not more or fewer witnesses of it. Mean time the greatest numbers were brought to the great Shepherd of their souls (next to London and Bristol) in Cornwall, the West-Riding of Yorkshire, and Newcastle upon Tyne. But still they were obliged in many places, to carry their lives in their hands. Several instances of this have already been related; and many more might still be added.

February 15, 1748, he left Bristol, and proceeded through Wales on his way to Ireland. On the 24th he reached Holyhead, where he was detained about twelve days. He did not remain idle; but

* See vol. i. page 195.

preached every day at some place in the neighborhood. "I never knew men," says Mr. Wesley, "make such poor lame excuses, as these captains did, for not sailing. It put me in mind of the epigram,

> "There are, if rightly I may think,
> Five causes why a man should drink.

"Which, with a little alteration would just suit them.

> "There are, unless my memory fail,
> Five causes why we should not sail.
> The fog is thick: the wind is high:
> It rains: or may do by and by:
> Or——any other reason why."

March 8, about one o'clock in the morning, they sailed, and came to Dublin in the evening, where Mr. Wesley found his brother meeting the society. On the 16th, he inquired into the state of the society. "Most pompous accounts," says Mr. Wesley, "had been sent me from time to time, of the great numbers that were added to it; so that I confidently expected to find therein, six or seven hundred members. And how is the real fact? I left three hundred and ninety-four members; and I doubt if there are now, three hundred and ninety-six!

"Let this be a warning to us all, how we give into that hateful custom of painting things beyond the life. Let us make a conscience of magnifying or exaggerating any thing. Let us rather speak under, than above the truth. We, of all men, should be punctual in all we say, that none of our words may fall to the ground." It is to be greatly lamented, that some few of the preachers have not given more attention to this caution, and to some others Mr. Wesley has left on record, concerning evil-speaking, than they seem to have done. I cannot conceive how any man can keep a good conscience, who does not religiously observe them.

Wednesday the 23d, he preached to the prisoners in Newgate. On the 30th he left Dublin, and rode to Philip's-Town, the shire town of the King's-County. The street was soon filled with those who flocked from every side. And even at five in the morning he had a large congregation. After preaching he spoke severally to those of the society; of whom forty were troopers. At noon he preached to a larger congregation than in Dublin; and adds, "I am persuaded, God did then make an offer of life to all the inhabitants of Philip's-Town."

The following days he preached at Tullamore, Tyrrell's-Pass, Claro, Temple-Maqueteer, Moat; and on Saturday April 2d, came to Athlone. His brother Charles, had been here some time before; though it was with the imminent hazard of his life. For within about a mile of the town, he was waylaid by a very numerous Popish

mob, who discharged a shower of stones, which he very narrowly escaped.* "This," says Mr. J. Wesley, "had an exceeding happy effect, prejudicing all the Protestants in our favor. And this seemed to increase every day. The morning I went away, most of the congregation were in tears. Indeed almost all the town seemed to be moved; full of good-will, and desires of salvation. But the waters were too wide to be deep. I found not one under strong conviction, much less had any one attained the knowledge of salvation, in hearing above thirty sermons. After re-visiting the towns I had seen before, on Tuesday the 16th, I returned to Dublin. Having staid a few days there, I made another little excursion through the country societies. May the 14th, I returned to Dublin, and had the satisfaction to find that the work of God, not only spread wider and wider, but was also much deepened in many souls. Wednesday the 18th, we took ship, and the next day landed at Holyhead."

Notwithstanding Mr. Wesley's daily employment in preaching, often morning, noon, and night, and his continual travelling from place to place; yet he had some years before this, formed the design of making collections from the most approved writers in the English language, on the subjects of practical divinity, and of printing them under the title of, A Christian Library. The letter which Dr. Doddridge sent him, with the list of books he had requested, greatly facilitated his labor, and he had now large materials ready for the work. He wrote to a friend, and mentions an intention of immediately executing the design. "Are you," says he, "still pressing toward the mark, the prize of your high calling? Is your hope full of immortality? Do you continue to count all things loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus? Some time since I was in much concern for you, lest you should be swallowed up in the things of earth. But I trust God has wrought a great deliverance for you, and given you to choose him for your God, and your all. O seek him with an undivided heart, till you see him as he is!

"I have often thought of mentioning to you, and a few others, a design I have had for some years, of printing a little library, perhaps of fourscore, or one hundred volumes, for the use of those that fear God.† My purpose was to select whatever I had seen most valuable in the English language, and either abridge, or take the whole tracts, only a little corrected or explained, as occasion should require. Of these I could print ten or twelve, more or less, every year, on a fine paper, and large letter, which should be cast for the purpose.—As soon as I am able to purchase a printing-press and types, I think of entering on this design. I have several books now ready; and a printer who desires nothing more than food and raiment. In three or

* See vol. i. page 197.

† It is evident enough from Dr. Doddridge's letter, that the first intention was, the benefit of the preachers.

four weeks I hope to be in London, and if God permit, to begin without delay."—He at length accomplished his design in fifty *duodecimo* volumes.

"June 24th," says Mr. Wesley, "being the day we had appointed for opening the school at Kingswood (that is for boarders) I preached there, on 'Train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.' My brother and I then administered the Lord's supper to many who came from far."—The following is an abstract from Mr. Wesley's "Short Account of the School in Kingswood, near Bristol," which was printed some years after this period.

"Our design is, with God's assistance, to train up children in every branch of useful learning.

"The school contains eight classes:

"In the first class the children read Instructions for Children, and Lessons for Children; and begin learning to write.

"In the second class they read The Manners of the ancient Christians, go on in writing, learn the Short English Grammar, the Short Latin Grammar, read *Prælectiones Pueriles:* translate them into English, and the Instructions for Children into Latin: part of which they transcribe and repeat.

"In the third class they read Dr. Cave's Primitive Christianity, go on in writing, perfect themselves in the English and Latin Grammar; read *Corderii Colloquia Selecta* and *Historiæ Selectæ:* translate *Historiæ Selectæ* into English, and Lessons for Children into Latin: part of which they transcribe and repeat.

"In the fourth class they read the Pilgrim's Progress, perfect themselves in writing: learn Dilworth's Arithmetic: read Castellio's Kempis and Cornelius Nepos: translate Castellio into English, and Manners of the Ancient Christians into Latin: transcribe and repeat select portions of moral and sacred poems.

"In the fifth class they read the Life of Mr. Haliburton, perfect themselves in arithmetic; read Select Dialogues of Erasmus, Phædrus and Sallust: translate Erasmus into English, and Primitive Christianity into Latin: transcribe and repeat select portions of moral and sacred poems.

"In the sixth class they read the Life of Mr. De Renty, and Kennet's Roman Antiquities: they learn Randal's Geography: read Cæsar, Select Parts of Terence and Velleius Paterculus: translate Erasmus into English, and the Life of Mr. Haliburton into Latin: transcribe and repeat select portions of sacred hymns and poems.

"In the seventh class they read Mr. Law's Christian Perfection, and Archbishop Potter's Greek Antiquities: they learn Bengelii *Introductio ad Chronologiam*, with Marshal's Chronological Tables: read Tully's Offices and Virgil's Æneid: translate Bengelius into English, and Mr. Law into Latin: learn (those who have a turn for it) to

make verses, and the Short Greek Grammar: read the Epistles of St. John: transcribe and repeat select portions of Milton.

"In the eighth class they read Mr. Law's Serious Call, and Lewis's Hebrew Antiquities: they learn to make themes and to declaim: learn Vossius's Rhetoric: read Tully's Tusculan Questions, and Selecta ex Ovidio, Virgilio, Horatio, Juvenale, Persio, Martiale: perfect themselves in the Greek Grammar; read the Gospels and Six Books of Homer's Iliad: translate Tully into English, and Mr. Law into Latin: learn the Short Hebrew Grammar, and read Genesis: transcribe and repeat Selecta ex Virgilio, Horatio, Juvenale.

"It is our particular desire, that all who are educated here, may be brought up in the fear of God: and at the utmost distance as from vice in general, so in particular from idleness and effeminacy. The children therefore of tender parents, so called, have no business here: for the rules will not be broken, in favor of any person whatsoever. Nor is any child received unless his parents agree, 1. That he shall observe all the rules of the house, and 2. That they will not take him from school, no, not a day, till they take him for good and all.

"The method observed in the school is this:

"*The First Class.*

Morn. 7. Read. 10. Write till eleven.
Aftern. 1. Read. 4. Write till five.

"*The Second Class.*

M. 7. Read the Manners of the Ancient Christians:
8. Learn the English Grammar: when that is ended, the Latin Grammar.
10. Learn to write.
A. 1. Learn to construe and parse Prælectiones Pueriles:
4. Translate into English and Latin alternately.

"*The Third Class.*

M. 7. Read Primitive Christianity:
8. Repeat English and Latin Grammar alternately.
9. Learn Corderius, and when that is ended, Historiæ Selectæ.
10. Write.
A. 1. Learn Corderius and Historiæ Selectæ.
4. Translate.

"*The Fourth Class.*

M. 7. Read the Pilgrim's Progress:
8. Repeat the Grammar:
9. Learn Castellio's Kempis, and when that is ended, Cornelius Nepos.
10. Write and learn Arithmetic:
A. 1. Learn Kempis and Cornelius Nepos.
4. Translate.

"*The Fifth Class.*

M. 7. Read Mr. Haliburton's Life.

M. 8. Repeat the Grammars:
9. Learn Erasmus; afterwards Phædrus; then Sallust:
10. Learn Arithmetic:
A. 1. Learn Erasmus, Phædrus, Sallust:
4. Translate.

"*The Sixth Class.*

M. 7. Read Mr. de Renty's Life:
8. Repeat the Grammars:
9. Learn Cæsar; afterwards Terence; then Velleius Paterculus:
10. Learn Geography:
A. 1. Learn Cæsar; Terence; Paterculus:
3. Read Roman Antiquities:
10. Translate.

"*The Seventh Class.*

M. 7. Read Mr. Law's Christian Perfection:
M. W. F. Learn the Greek Grammar; and read the Greek Testament:
Tu. Th. Sat. Learn Tully; afterwards Virgil:
10. Learn Chronology:
A. 1. Learn Latin and Greek alternately, as in the morning:
3. Read Grecian Antiquities:
4. Translate and make verses alternately.

"*The Eighth Class.*

M. 7. Read Mr. Law's Serious Call:
M. Th. Latin.
Tu. Frid. Greek.
W. S. Hebrew; and so at one in the afternoons:
10. Learn Rhetoric:
A. 3. Read Hebrew Antiquities:
4. Mond. Thurs. translate.
Tues. Frid. make verses:
Wed. make a theme:
Sat. write a declamation.

"All the other classes spend Saturday afternoon in Arithmetic, and in transcribing what they learn on Sunday, and repeat on Monday morning."

Mr. Wesley adds; "The following method may be observed, by those who design to go through a course of academical learning.

"FIRST YEAR.

"Read Lowth's English Grammar,	Corn. Nepos,
Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, } Grammars,	Sallust,
	Cæsar,
	Tully's Offices,
	Terence,
	Phædrus,

Æneid,
Dilworth, Randal, Bengel, Vossius,
Aldrich and Wallis's Logic,
Langbain's Ethics,
Hutchinson on the Passions,
Spanheim's Introduction on the Ecclesiastical History,
Puffendorf's Introduction to the History of Europe,
Moral and Sacred Poems,
Hebrew Pentateuch, with the Notes,
Greek Testament, Matt.
————-Acts, with the Notes:
Xenophon's Cyrus,
Homer's Iliad,
Bishop Pearson on the Creed,
Ten volumes of the Christian Library.

"SECOND YEAR.

"Look over the Grammars,
Read Vell. Paterculus,
Tusculan Questions,
Excerpta,
Vidæ Opera,
Lusus Westmonasteriensis,
Chronological Tables,
Euclid's Elements,
Well's Tracts,
Newton's Principia,
Mosheim's Introduction to Church History,
Usher's Annals,
Burnet's Hist. of the Reformation,
Spenser's Fairy Queen,
Historical Books of the Hebrew Bible,
Greek Testament,
Homer's Odyssey,
Twelve volumes of the Christian Library,
Ramsay's Cyrus,
Racine.

"THIRD YEAR.

"Look over the Grammars,
Livy,
Suetonius,
Tully de Finibus,
Musæ Anglicanæ,
Dr. Burton's Poemata,
Ld. Forbes' Tracts,
Abridgment of Hutchinson's Wks.
Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation,
Rollin's Ancient History,
Hume's History of England,
Neal's History of the Puritans,
Milton's Poetical Works,
Hebrew Bible, Job—Canticles,
Greek Testament,
Plato's Dialogues,
Greek Epigrams,
Twelve volumes of the Christian Library,
Pascal,
Corneille."

"FOURTH YEAR.

"Look over the Grammars,
Tacitus,
Grotii Historia Belgica,
Tully de Natura Deorum,
Prædium Rusticum,
Carmina Quadragesimalia,
Philosophical Transactions abridged
Watt's Astronomy, &c.
Compendium Metaphysicæ,
Watts's Ontology,
Locke's Essay,
Malebranche,
Clarendon's History,
Neal's History of New England,
Antonio Solis' History of Mexico,
Shakspeare,
Rest of the Hebrew Bible,
Greek Testament,
Epictetus,

Marcus Antoninus,
Poetæ Minores,
End the Christian Library,
La Fausseté de les Vertues humanes. Quesnell sur les Evangiles.

"Whoever carefully goes through this course, will be a better scholar than nine in ten of the graduates at Oxford or Cambridge."

About the time this short account was printed, Mr. Wesley asked in the Conference, "What can be done to make the Methodists sensible of the excellency of Kingswood School?"—The answer agreed upon, was,

"Let every Assistant read the following account of it yearly, in every society. 1. The wisdom and love of God have now thrust out a large number of laborers into his harvest; men who desire nothing on earth but to promote the glory of God, to save their own souls, and them that hear them. And those to whom they minister spiritual things, willingly minister to them of their carnal things; so that they have food to eat and raiment to put on, and are content therewith.

2 "A competent provision is likewise made for the wives of married preachers. These also lack for nothing, having a weekly allowance over and above for their little children: so that neither they nor their husbands need be careful about many things, but may wait upon the Lord without distraction.

3. "But one considerable difficulty lies on those who have boys, when they grow too big to be under their mother's direction. Having no father to govern and instruct them, they are exposed to a thousand temptations. To remedy this, we have a school on purpose for them, wherein they have all the instruction they are capable of, together with all things needful for the body, clothes only excepted. And it may be, if God prosper this labor of love, they will have these too shortly.

4. "In whatever view we look upon this, it is one of the noblest charities that can be conceived. How reasonable is the institution? Is it fit that the children of those who leave wife, home, and all that is dear, to save souls from death, should want what is needful either for soul or body? Ought not we to supply what the parent cannot, because of his labors in the gospel? How excellent are the effects of this institution? The preacher eased of this weight can the more easily go on in his labor. And perhaps many of those children may hereafter fill up the place of those that shall rest from their labors.

5. "But the expense of such an undertaking is very large: so that although we have at present but thirteen or fourteen poor children, we are continually running behind, notwithstanding the yearly subscription made at London and Bristol. The best means we could think of at our late Conference to supply the deficiency is, once a year to desire the assistance of all those in every place who wish well to the work of God; all who long to see sinners converted to God, and the kingdom of Christ set up in all the earth."

From this time a public collection has been made through all the societies once in every year, for Kingswood School. The last year, 1794, it amounted to twelve hundred and eighty-four pounds, eighteen shillings and one penny!

July 18th, Mr. Wesley was at Newcastle upon Tyne; and from thence proceeded northward, preaching at several places in his way, till he came to Berwick upon Tweed. Here he preached three or four times, in a large green space, near the governor's house. A little society had been formed at this place some time before, which was now considerably increased: and several members of it, walked worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called. On the 23d, after preaching at other places on his way back, he returned to Newcastle.

During the summer, there was a large increase of the work of God, both in Northumberland, the county of Durham, and Yorkshire: as also in the most savage part of Lancashire; though here in particular the preachers carried their lives in their hands. A specimen of the treatment they met with there, may be seen in the following brief account.

"On August 26th," says Mr. Wesley, "while I was speaking to some quiet people at Roughley, near Coln in Lancashire, a drunken rabble came, the captain of whom said he was a deputy constable, and I must go with him. I had scarce gone ten yards, when one of his company struck me in the face with all his might. Another threw his stick at my head: all the rest were like as many ramping and roaring lions. They brought me, with Mr. Grimshaw, the minister of Haworth; Mr. Colbeck of Kighley, and Mr. Macford of Newcastle (who never recovered the abuse he then received) into a public-house at Barrowford, a neighboring village, where all their forces were gathered together.

"Soon after Mr. Hargrave, the high constable, came, and required me to promise I would come to Roughley no more. This I flatly refused. But upon saying, I will not preach here now, he undertook to quiet the mob. While he and I walked out at one door, Mr. Grimshaw, and Colbeck, went out at the other. The mob immediately closed them in, tossed them to and fro with the greatest violence, threw Mr. Grimshaw down, and loaded them both with dirt and mire of every kind. The other quiet harmless people, who followed me at a distance, they treated full as ill. They poured upon them showers of dirt and stones, without any regard to age or sex. Some of them they trampled in the mire, and dragged by the hair of the head.—Many they beat with their clubs without mercy. One they forced to leap from a rock, ten or twelve feet high, into the river. And when he crept out, wet and bruised, were hardly persuaded not to throw him in again. Such was the recompense we frequently received from our countrymen, for our labor of love."

I find nothing very remarkable during the following year, except Mr. Wesley's perseverance in his frequent journies, and incessant

labors. In the beginning of the year 1750, having been informed of the violence of the mobs at Cork, against both the preachers and people, and being in nothing terrified by the adversaries, he determined to set out for the scene of riot. Accordingly, April 7th, he embarked at Holyhead in the morning, and in the evening landed in Dublin. Here he received a full account of the shocking outrages which had been committed at Cork, for several months together; and which the good magistrates had encouraged rather than opposed. At the Lent assizes, several depositions were laid before the grand jury, against the rioters: yet they did not find any of these bills! But they found a bill against a poor baker, who, when the mob were discharging a shower of stones upon him, discharged a pistol without ball, over their heads, which put them into such bodily fear, that they all ran away, without looking behind them.

Having tarried ten or twelve days in Dublin, Mr. Wesley began his journey through the country societes, towards Cork, where he arrived May the 19th. The next day, understanding the house was small, he went out about eight o'clock, to Hammond's Marsh: at that time a large open space, but since built over. Here he preached, to a large and deeply attentive congregation. In the afternoon, two of the preachers went to the mayor, and asked, if it would be disagreeable to him, that Mr. Wesley should preach on the Marsh? He answered, "Sir, I will have no more mobs and riots." One of them replied, "Sir, Mr. Wesley has made none." He then spake plainly, "Sir, I will have no more preaching. And if Mr. Wesley attempts it, I am prepared for him." Here was a chief magistrate, who, if Mr. Wesley attempted to preach and instruct the people in their duty to God and man, was determined to make a riot to hinder him!

The following is an abstract from Mr. Wesley's Journal, of what took place afterwards, at Cork, and at Bandon. "I would not therefore, attempt to preach on the Marsh, but began in our own house about five (in the evening on the same day, being Sunday.) The good mayor, mean time, was walking on the 'Change, and giving orders to his sergeants and the town drummers, who immediately came down to the house, with an innumerable mob attending him. They continued drumming, and I continued preaching, till I had finished my discourse. When I came out, the mob presently closed me in. Observing one of the sergeants standing by me, I desired him to keep the king's peace. But he replied, 'Sir, I have no orders to do that.' As soon as I came into the open street, the rabble threw whatever came to hand. But all went by me, or over my head; nor do I remember that any thing touched me. I walked straight through the midst of the rabble, looking every man before me in the face; and they opened to the right and left, till I came near Dant's Bridge. A large party had taken possession of this: but when I came up, they likewise shrunk back, and I walked through them to Mr. Jenkins's

house. But a stout Papist-woman stood just within the door, and would not let me come in, till one of the mob, aiming I suppose at me, knocked her down flat. I then went in, and God restrained the wild beasts, so that no one attempted to follow me.

"But many of the congregation were more roughly handled; particularly Mr. Jones, who was covered with mud, and escaped with his life almost by miracle. Finding the mob were not inclined to disperse, I sent to Alderman Pembrook, who immediately desired Alderman Wenthrop, his nephew, to go down to Mr. Jenkins's: with whom I walked up the street, none giving an unkind or disrespectful word.

"All the following week it was at the peril of his life, if any Methodist stirred out of doors. And the case was much the same, during the whole mayoralty of Mr. Crone. But the succeeding mayor, declared in good earnest, 'There shall be no more mobs or riots in Cork.' And he did totally suppress them. So that from that time forward, even the Methodists enjoyed the same liberty with the rest of his majesty's subjects.

"In the mean time the work of God went on with little opposition, both in other parts of the county of Cork, and at Waterford, and Limerick; as well as in Mountmelick, Athlone, Longford, and most parts of the province of Leinster. In my return from Cork, I had an opportunity of visiting all these. And I had the satisfaction of observing, how greatly God had blessed my fellow-laborers, and how many sinners were saved from the error of their ways. Many of these had been eminent for all manner of sins: many had been Roman Catholics. And I suppose the number of these (Roman-Catholics, converted) would have been far greater, had not the good Protestants, as well as the Popish priests, taken true pains to hinder them."

During Mr. Wesley's stay at Cork, and in its neighborhood, he observes, "All this time God gave us great peace at Bandon, notwithstanding the unwearied labors, both public and private of Dr. B. to stir up the people. But Saturday 26, many were under great apprehensions, of what was to be done in the evening. I began preaching in the main street at the usual hour, but to more than twice the usual congregation. After I had spoke about a quarter of an hour, a clergyman, who had planted himself near me, with a very large stick in his hand, according to agreement opened the scene. Indeed his friends assured me, 'he was in drink, or he would not have done it.' But before he had uttered many words, two or three resolute women, by main strength pulled him into an house, and after expostulating a little, sent him away through the garden.—The next champion that appeared, was a young gentleman of the town.—But his triumph too was short: for some of the people quickly bore him away, though with much gentleness and civility. The third came on with far greater fury: but he was encountered by a butcher of the town, not

one of the Methodists, who used him as he would an ox, bestowing one or two heavy blows on his head. This cooled his courage, especially as none took his part. So I quietly finished my discourse."

Mr. Wesley continued his labors in Ireland, till July 22, when he set sail for Bristol. He staid here only a few days, and then went on to visit the societies through the West of England, as far as Cornwall; in which service he spent near six weeks. August 15, he observes, "By reflecting on an odd book which I had read in this journey, 'The general delusion of Christians with regard to prophecy,' I was fully convinced of what I had long suspected; 1. That the Montanists, in the second and third centuries, were real scriptural Christians: and 2. That the grand reason why the miraculous gifts were so soon withdrawn, was, not only that faith and holiness were well-nigh lost, but that dry, formal, orthodox men, began even then to ridicule whatever gifts they had not themselves, and to decry them all, as either madness or imposture."*

On his return from Cornwall, he preached in the street at Shaftsbury; but none made any noise, or spake one word, while he called the wicked to forsake his way. When he was returned to the house where he lodged, a constable came, and said, "Sir, the mayor discharges you from preaching in this borough any more." Mr. Wesley replied, "While King George gives me leave to preach, I shall not ask leave of the mayor of Shaftsbury."

Sept. 8, he came to London, and received the following account of the death of one of the travelling preachers. "John Jane was never well after walking from Epworth to Hainton, on an exceeding hot day, which threw him into a fever. But he was in great peace and love, even to those who greatly wanted love to him. He was some time at Alice Shadforth's house, with whom he daily talked of the things of God; spent much time in private prayer; and joined likewise with her in prayer several times in a day: On Friday, Aug. 24, he sat in the evening by the fire-side: about six he fetched a deep sigh, and never spoke more. He was alive till the same time on Saturday, when without any struggle or sign of pain, with a smile

* The Montanists were a sect of Christians, which sprung up about the year of Christ 171. They took their name from Montanus, a Phrygian by birth. They made no alteration in the creed, or articles of belief then commonly received. They were abstemious and moral in their conduct. But they maintained that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, were not withdrawn from the faithful and pious; and that they had among themselves the gift of prophecy, &c. It is to be lamented, that, at this early period of Christianity, Christian principles, and Christion practice, or morality, were too much separated: and that whoever differed from the rulers of the church, were immediately branded with the name of Heretics; their principles and practices represented with little or no regard to truth; and all manner of evil was spoken of them, to deter the people from going near them. I wish the modern professors of Christianity, of every denomination, with all their boasted liberality and professions of candor, were wholly free from this contagious leprosy, which so deforms the Christian character, and leads directly to persecution.

on his face, he passed away. His last words were, 'I find the love of God in Christ Jesus.'

"All his clothes, linen, and woollen, stockings, hat, and wig, are not thought sufficient to answer his funeral expenses, which amount to one pound seventeen shillings and three-pence. All the money he had was, one shilling and four-pence."—"Enough," adds Mr. Wesley, "for any unmarried preacher of the gospel, to leave to his executors."—Mr. Wesley spent the remainder of the year in London, Bristol, and the neighboring places; and in preparing several books for the use of the children at Kingswood School.

Mr. Wesley had many difficulties to encounter, not only from those who openly opposed him; but from many who were in connexion with him: especially from some of the preachers, who already began to wish, that the Methodists might become a distinct and complete body, or church, among themselves; by which step, they would have, in order to support their own existence, a separate interest to maintain, in opposition to the established church, and in some respects to every denomination of Dissenters. This was in flat opposition to Mr. Wesley's design in forming the Methodist Societies, which was to promote scriptural holiness through the land, without any particular regard to the distinction of parties. At this time, and for some years afterwards, he frequently corresponded with Mr. Edward Perronet, whom he sincerely esteemed, and to whom he often opened his mind with great freedom. I shall make an extract or two, from the letters written in the present year,* relative to this and some other subjects.

From Ireland, he observes, "I have abundance of complaints to make, as well as to hear. I have scarce any on whom I can depend, when I am an hundred miles off. 'T is well if I do not run away soon, and leave them to cut and shuffle for themselves. Here is a glorious people. But O! where are the shepherds?

"The society at Cork have fairly sent me word, that they will take care of themselves, and erect themselves into a Dissenting congregation. I am weary of these sons of Zeruiah: they are too hard for me. Dear Ted, stand fast, whether I stand or fall."

In another letter, he says, "Charles,† and you behave as I want you to do. But you cannot, or will not, preach where I desire. Others, can and will preach where I desire: but they do not behave as I want them to do. I have a fine time between the one and the other." And again in the third, "I think both Charles, and you have, in the general, a right sense of what it is to serve as sons in the Gospel. And if all our helpers had had the same, the work of God would have prospered better, both in England and Ireland." About a fort-

* The letters written by Mr. Wesley to Mr. Perronet, came into the hands of Mr. Shrubsole, after Mr. Perronet's death; and I am greatly obliged to him for the use of them.

† Charles Perronet, the brother of Edward.

night afterwards, he writes thus on the same subject, "You put the thing right. I have not one preacher with me, and not six in England, whose wills are broken enough, to serve me as sons in the Gospel."

On the subject of reproof, and of remedying things that were amiss, he observes to his friend, "Come on, now you have broke the ice, and tell me the other half of your mind. I always blamed you for speaking too little, not too much. When you spoke most freely, as at Whitehaven, it was best for us both.

"I did not always disbelieve, when I said nothing. But I would not attempt a thing, till I could carry it. *Tu quod scis, nescis*, is an useful rule, till I can remedy what I know. As you observe, many things are remedied already: and many more will be. But you consider, I have none to second me. They who should do it, start aside as a broken bow."

The following abstract from a letter written to Mr. Wesley by one who loved and highly esteemed him, may show us, that he had some friends who spake their minds freely, when they saw any thing which in their judgment deserved censure or blame. "I love, I honor, I reverence you," says the writer, "for your great worth, wisdom and high office: yet I have not that fellowship with you, that I once had with T. S.—I have loved your company, loved your conversation, admired your wisdom, been greatly blessed under your discourses and exhortations: and yet we are two spirits!—I think you have the knowledge of all experience, but not the experience of all you know. You know, speaking with limitation, the heights and depths, the beginning and the end of true religion. You know the fallen state of man, his inability to rise again; the freeness of redeeming love, and the mighty workings of the Holy Ghost. You know, the heaven and happiness of man, is to feel a change of nature, to enjoy deep communion with God, and to walk in love with all around. All these things you know, partly by the information of others, and partly from experience. But I think your experience is buried in your extensive knowledge. I think you feel not, abidingly, a deep sense of your own spiritual weakness, the nearness of Christ to save, nor a sweet communion with God, by the Holy Ghost. You have the appearance of all Christian graces, but they do not, I think, spring from a deep experience, or change of nature. A good nature (temper of mind) with great abilities, will mimic grace; but grace is more than outward; it brings the soul to a deep union with God, and its fellow Christians. One outward proof from which I think I judge aright, is, the want of SYMPATHY in your discourses and conversation. Those who attend to an inward work, more than to an outward, pass through many weighty and grievous conflicts, from the stubbornness of their own nature, or the subtilty of the devil, so that often they go on lamenting and weeping, and yet trusting in God. When do you

feelingly, and with tears address yourself unto such?—That the cause, the only cause of my disunion with you, may be in myself, I cannot but allow. My ignorance, my weakness, my aptness to mistake, is great! My judgment is often biassed by circumstances too immaterial to be the ground of determination; and therefore often, yea mostly, rather than be in danger of judging amiss, I remain in doubtful silence." Signed, W. Briggs.

January 30, 1751, Mr. Wesley at the pressing request of Dr. Isham, then rector of Lincoln-College, set out early in the morning to vote for a member of parliament. It was a severe frost, the wind north-west, full in his face, and the roads so slippery that the horses could scarcely keep their feet. Nevertheless about seven in the evening, he, and those with him, for he never travelled alone, came safe to Oxford. A congregation was waiting for him, whom he immediately addressed in those awful words, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul."—The next day he went to the schools, where the convocation was met. "But," says he, "I did not find that decency and order which I expected. The gentleman for whom I voted, was not elected: yet I did not repent of my coming; I owe much more than this to that generous, friendly man, who now rests from his labors." Mr. Wesley means Dr. Morley, who so generously assisted him with his interest, when he was elected Fellow of Lincoln-College.*

A year or more, before this period, Mr. Wesley had formed a resolution to marry. But the affair coming to the knowledge of Mr. Charles Wesley before marriage took place, he found means to prevent it; for reasons which appeared to him of sufficient importance to authorize him to interfere in the business. Mr. John Wesley, however, thought otherwise, and this was the first breach of that union and harmony which had now subsisted between the two brothers, without interruption, for more than twenty years. Notwithstanding this disappointment, Mr. Wesley still continued in the resolution to marry; and having fixed his choice of a partner, he proposed the matter to the Reverend Mr. Perronet, of Shoreham. February 2, he received Mr. Perronet's answer, who wrote as a Christian minister ought to write, in favor of marriage. In a few days after, he married Mrs. Vizelle, a widow lady of independent fortune. But before the marriage, he took care that her fortune should be wholly settled upon herself, refusing to have the command of one shilling of her property. Mr. Wesley's constant habit of travelling from place to place, through Great Britain and Ireland, the number of persons who came to visit him wherever he was, and his extensive correspondence with the members of the society, were circumstances unfavorable to that social intercourse, mutual openness and confidence, which form the basis of happiness in the married state. These circumstances, indeed,

See vol. i. page 245.

would not have been so very unfavorable, had he married a woman who could have entered into his views, and have accommodated herself to his situation. But this was not the case. Had he searched the whole kingdom on purpose, he would hardly have found a woman more unsuitable in these respects, than she whom he married.

Some years before his marriage, Mr. Wesley had written a small tract in favor of celibacy. Not that he condemned, or even disapproved of prudent marriages, but he thought celibacy, to those who could live comfortably in it, more favorable to religious improvement than a state of matrimony. He considered Paul's advice to the church at Corinth, as a standing rule in all circumstances of Christians. It is really wonderful how he could fall into this error, as the Apostle expressly says, that he gave that advice διὰ τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην, 'on account of the impending distress;' that is, on account of the persecutions both from Jews and Gentiles, which already threatened the churches; when men and women being dragged to prison, or to death, it would be more easy and convenient not to be entangled with the cares of a family. It does not appear however, that Mr. Wesley, in writing that tract, had any reference to his own situation in particular; or, that he had formed a resolution never to marry. But had even this been the case, his marriage would only show the truth of the words of Horace, *Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret.* You may repel nature by violence, but still she will return upon you. This is undoubtedly true of those propensities which are purely natural and congenial to the human constitution. Juvenal, indeed, asserts nearly the same thing of vicious habits, which form a kind of secondary nature:

> ——*Tamen ad mores natura recurrit*
> *Damnatos, fixa et mutari nescia*——

This might perhaps be true, without the light of the gospel, and the interpositions of divine grace.

March 27, Mr. Wesley set out on his northern journey. He travelled through the societies as far as Whitehaven, and April 20, came to Newcastle. On the 24th, he set out with Mr. Hopper, to pay his first visit to Scotland. He was invited thither by captain (afterwards colonel) Galatin, who was then quartered at Musselborough. "I had no intention," says he, "to preach in Scotland; not imagining that there were any that desired I should. But I was mistaken. Curiosity, if nothing else, brought abundance of people together in the evening. And whereas in the kirk, Mrs. Galatin informed me, there used to be laughing and talking, and all the marks of the grossest inattention; it was far otherwise here. They remained as statues from the beginning of the sermon to the end. I preached again at six in the evening, on, 'Seek ye the Lord while he may be found.' I used great plainness of speech towards high and low: and they all re-

ceived it in love: so that the prejudice which had been several years planting, was torn up by the roots in one hour. After preaching, one of the bailiffs of the town, with one of the elders of the kirk, came to me, and begged I would stay with them a while; nay, if it were but two or three days, and they would fit up a larger place than the school, and prepare seats for the congregations. Had not my time been fixed, I should gladly have complied. All that I could now do, was to give them a promise, that Mr. Hopper would come back the next week and spend a few days with them. And it was not without a fair prospect. The congregations were very numerous; many were cut to the heart; and several joined together in a little society.'

May 15. Mr. Wesley came to Leeds. Here he held a conference with about thirty of the preachers. He inquired particularly into their qualifications, as to their grace and gifts; and into the fruits of their labors; and tells us he found no reason to doubt, except of one only.

Mr. Wesley had now been married upwards of three months: and June the 1st he resigned his fellowship. His letter of resignation was, I believe, in the words of one of the established forms of the college, for that purpose. It was as follows. "Ego Johannes Wesley, Collegii Lincolniensis in Academia Oxoniensi Socius, quicquid mihi juris est in prædicta Societate, ejusdem Rectori et Sociis sponte ac liberè resigno: illis universis et singulis, perpetuam pacem, ac omnimodam in Christo felicitatem exoptans."

CHAPTER III.

OF MR. WESLEY'S MINISTERIAL LABORS, AND THE SPREAD OF METHODISM, TILL THE CONFERENCE IN 1770: WITH AN EXTRACT FROM THE LARGER MINUTES; GIVING A VIEW OF VARIOUS REGULATIONS RESPECTING THE PREACHERS, &C. &C.

The materials for this life are so abundant, without having recourse to Mr. Wesley's printed works; and the present volume begins to fill up so very fast, that I shall be obliged in future to take but little notice of the journies of this laborious and successful minister of Christ. Many papers have been put into my hands since the first volume of this work was published. I shall not therefore be able to do more in the remaining part of this volume, than print such extracts from the materials before me, as may exhibit to our view the most striking features of this great man's character, and of the work in which he was engaged.

It has been stated above,* that Mr. Charles Wesley, in the course of the present year, went into Yorkshire, with a commission to inquire more particularly into the character and moral conduct of the preachers in their several stations. He found one or two, who did not walk worthy of the gospel; and several more whom he thought utterly unqualified to preach. In the execution of his commission, Mr. John Wesley wrote to him very frequently. The following are extracts from some of his letters on this occasion.

July 17. "I fear for C. S—— and J. C—— more and more. I have heard they frequently and bitterly rail against the church."—On this Mr. Charles Wesley puts the following query: "What assurance can we have, that they will not forsake it, at least when we are dead? Ought we to admit any man for a preacher, till we can trust his invariable attachment to the church?'

July 20. "The societies both must and shall maintain the preachers we send among them, or I will preach among them no more. The least that I can say to any of these preachers, is, 'Give yourself wholly to the work, and you shall have food to eat, and raiment to put on.' And I cannot see that any preacher is called to any people, who will not thus maintain him. Almost everything depends on you and me: let nothing damp or hinder us: only let us be alive, and put forth all our strength."

July 24. "As to the preachers, my counsel is, not to check the young ones without strong necessity. If we lay some aside, we must have a supply; and of the two, I prefer grace before gifts."—Mr. Charles puts a query. "Are not both indispensably necessary? Has not the cause suffered, in Ireland especially, through the insufficiency —of the preachers? Should we not first regulate, reform, and bring into discipline, the preachers we have, before we look for more? Should we not also watch and labor, to prevent the mischiefs which the discarded preachers may occasion?"

July 27. "What is it, that has eaten out the heart of half our preachers, particularly those in Ireland? Absolutely idleness; their not being constantly employed. I see it plainer and plainer. Therefore I beg you will inquire of each, 'How do you spend your time from morning to evening?' And give him his choice, 'Either follow your trade, or resolve before God, to spend the same hours in reading, &c. which you used to spend in working.'"

August 3. "I heartily concur with you, in dealing with all (not only with disorderly walkers, but also) triflers, μαλακες, πολυπραγμονας, the effeminate and busybodies, as with M. F——. I spoke to one this morning, so that I was even amazed at myself."

August 8. "We must have forty itinerant preachers, or drop some of our societies. You cannot so well judge of this, without seeing the letters I receive from all parts."

* Vol. i. page 211.

August 15. "If our preachers do not, nor will not, spend all their time in study and saving souls, they must be employed close in other work, or perish."

August 17. "C. S—— pleads for a kind of aristocracy, and says you and I, should do nothing without the consent of all the preachers; otherwise we govern arbitrarily, to which they cannot submit. Whence is this?"

August 24. "O that you and I, may arise and stand upright! I quite agree with you: let us have but six, so we are all one. I have sent one more home to his work. We may trust God to send forth more laborers; only be not unwilling to receive them, when there is reasonable proof that he has sent them."

August 21, Mr. Wesley wrote thus to a friend. "I see plainly the spirit of Ham if not of Corah, has fully possessed several of our preachers. So much the more freely and firmly, do I acquiesce in the determination of my brother, 'That it is far better for us to have ten, or six preachers who are alive to God, sound in the faith, and of one heart with us and with one another, than fifty of whom we have no such assurance.'"

In August, Mr. Charles Wesley wrote to his brother under great oppression of mind, and in very strong language. Wherever he saw some things wrong, his fears suggested to him that there might be many more which he did not see; and the natural warmth of his temper, led him to use expressions abundantly more severe than the case required. But the preachers against whom he had no material charge, but want of qualifications for their office, had nothing more to do, than write to Mr. John Wesley, a letter of humiliation and entire submission, and the matter was settled with him, and he would give them fresh encouragement. This conduct of Mr. John Wesley, made his brother appear as an enemy to the preachers, and himself as their protector and friend; which was another means of weakening the union that had long subsisted between them.

Being returned to London, the two brothers went down to Shoreham, in November, and talked the matter over in the presence of Mr. Perronet. They both expressed their entire satisfaction in the end which each had in view; namely, the glory of God, and the salvation of souls. They both acknowledged their sincerity in desiring union between themselves, as the means to that end; and after much conversation, they both agreed to act in concert with respect to the preachers, so that neither of them should admit or refuse any, but such as both admitted or refused.—About six weeks afterwards, they were at Shoreham again, and then signed the following articles of agreement:

"With regard to the preachers, we agree,

1. "That none shall be permitted to preach in any of our societies, till he be examined, both as to his grace and gifts; at least by the

assistant, who sending word to us, may by our answer admit him a *local* preacher.

2. "That such preacher be not immediately taken from his trade, but be exhorted to follow it with all diligence.

3. "That no person shall be received as a *travelling* preacher, or be taken from his trade, by either of us alone, but by both of us conjointly, giving him a note under both our hands.

4. "That neither of us will re-admit a travelling preacher laid aside, without the consent of the other.

5. "That if we should disagree in our judgment, we will refer the matter to Mr. Perronet.

6. "That we will entirely be patterns of all we expect from every preacher; particularly of zeal, diligence, and punctuality in the work: by constantly preaching and meeting the society; by visiting yearly, Ireland, Cornwall, and the north; and in general by superintending the whole work, and every branch of it, with all the strength which God shall give us. We agree to the above written, till this day next year, in the presence of Mr. Perronet.

"JOHN WESLEY,
"CHARLES WESLEY."*

Mr. John Wesley was prevailed upon, with some difficulty, to sign these articles. But though he did at length sign them, they produced no good effect. Mr. Wesley would not submit to any control in admitting preachers into the connexion, in appointing them to the different circuits, or in governing the societies. It appears to me, that, after the first difference with his brother, who disappointed his intended marriage, he made up his mind not to suffer either a superior or an equal in these respects. From that time he seemed determined to be, *aut Cæsar aut nihil.* Mr. Charles, perceiving his brother's determination, and finding that the preachers became more and more prejudiced against him, thought it most prudent to withdraw from the active situation he had hitherto held amongst them; reserving to himself, however, the right of speaking his mind freely to his brother in a friendly correspondence, on various occasions through the remaining part of life.

About this time Mr. Wesley received a letter from the Reverend Mr. Milner, who had been at Chester, and writes as follows, on the temper of the bishop towards the Methodists. "The bishop," says he, "I was told, was exceeding angry at my late excursion into the north in your company. But found his lordship in much better temper than I was bid to expect by my brother Graves, who was so prudent, that he would not go with one so obnoxious to the bishop's displeasure, and all the storm of anger fell upon him. When he told

* This and several other articles that will be inserted in this volume, have been transcribed from Mr. Charles Wesley's papers written in short-hand; which were put into my hands after the first volume was published.

me how he had been treated, for speaking in your defence, I was fully persuaded all the bitterness was past, and accordingly found it.—I told his lordship that God was with you of a truth; and he seemed pleased with the relation of the conversion of the barber at Bolton: and with your design of answering Taylor's book on Original Sin.—I have made no secret of your manner of proceeding, to any with whom I have conversed, since I had the happiness of being in your company. And to the bishop I was very particular in telling him, what an assembly of worshippers there is at Newcastle: how plainly the badge of Christianity, *love*, is there to be seen. When his lordship talked about order, I begged leave to observe that I had nowhere seen such a want of it, as in his own cathedral; the preacher so miserably at a loss, that the children took notice of it: and the choristers so rude, as to be talking and thrusting one another with their elbows. At last I told him, there was need of some extraordinary messengers from God, to call us back to the doctrines of the reformation; for I did not know one of my brethren in Lancashire, that would give the church's definition of faith, and stand to it.—And alas, I had sad experience of the same falling away in Cheshire; for one of his son's curates would not let me preach for him because of that definition of faith."

In the ensuing year, Mr. Wesley continued his labors and travels, with the same vigor and diligence, through various parts of England and Ireland. February, 1753, he makes the following observations. "I now looked over Mr. Prince's history. What an amazing difference is there, in the manner wherein God has carried on his work in England, and in America! There above an hundred of the established clergy, men of age and experience, and of the greatest note for sense and learning in those parts, are zealously engaged in the work. Here, almost the whole body of aged, experienced, learned clergy, are zealously engaged against it: and few but a handful of raw, young men engaged in it, without name, learning, or eminent sense! And yet by that large number of honorable men, the work seldom flourished above six months at a time, and then followed a lamentable and general decay, before the next revival of it: whereas that which God hath wrought by these despised instruments, has continually increased for fifteen years together. and at whatever time it has declined in any one place, it has more eminently flourished in others."

In April, he set out again for Scotland; not indeed for Musselborough, but to Glasgow, to which place he was invited by the pious and laborious Mr. Gillies, minister at the college-kirk. He staid here five days, preaching to very large and attentive congregations. Soon after he left Glasgow, Mr. Gillies wrote to him as follows:—"The singing of hymns here, meets with greater opposition than I expected. Serious people are much divided. Those of better understanding and education, are silent; but many others are so prejudiced, especially

at the singing publicly, that they speak openly against it, and look upon me as left to do a very wrong or sinful thing. I beg your advice, whether to answer them only by continuing in the practice of the thing, with such as have freedom to join, looking to the Lord for a blessing upon his own ordinance: or, if I should publish a sheet of arguments from reason, and Scripture, and the example of the godly.—Your experience of the most effectual way of dealing with people's prejudices, makes your advice on this head of the greater importance.

"I bless the Lord for the benefit and comfort of your acquaintance: for your important assistance in my Historical Collections, and for your edifying conversation and sermons in this place. May our gracious God prosper you wherever you are. O my dear sir, pray for your brother, that I may be employed in doing something for the advancement of his glory, who has done so much for me, and who is my only hope."

In July, after one of the preachers had been there for some time, Mr. Wesley crossed over from Portsmouth to the Isle of Wight. From Cowes, they went forward to Newport, the chief town of the Isle. Here they found a little society in tolerable order; several of whom had found peace with God, and walked in the light of his countenance. At half an hour after six he preached in the market-place to a numerous congregation: but many of them were remarkably ill-behaved. The children made such noise: and many grown persons were talking aloud most of the time he was preaching. "There was," says Mr. Wesley, "a large congregation again at five in the morning: and every person therein, seemed to know that this was the word whereby God would judge him in the last day. In the evening the congregation was more numerous, and far more serious than the night before; only one drunken man made a little disturbance, but the mayor ordered him to be taken away. In October, I visited them again, and spent three or four days with much comfort; finding those who had before professed to find peace, had walked suitably to their profession."

To know the whole of a man's character, it is not sufficient to view him as he always appears before the public; we wish to see him in his more retired moments, and particularly in his private correspondence. The two following letters will show Mr. Wesley's temper in answering charges that were privately brought against him, either from prejudice or misapprehension. "You give," says he, "five reasons why the Reverend Mr. P. will come no more amongst us: 1. 'Because we despise the ministers of the Church of England.' —This I flatly deny. I am answering letters this very post, which bitterly blame me for just the contrary. 2. 'Because so much backbiting, and evil-speaking is suffered amongst our people.'—It is not *suffered:* all possible means are used, both to prevent and remove it.

3. 'Because I, who have written so much against hoarding up money, have put out seven hundred pounds to interest.'—I never put sixpence out to interest since I was born; nor had I ever one hundred pounds together, my own, since I came into the world. 4. 'Because our lay-preachers have told many stories of my brother and me.'—If they did I am sorry for them: when I hear the particulars I can answer, and perhaps make those ashamed who believed them. 5. 'Because we did not help a friend in distress.'—We did help him as far as we were able. 'But we might have made his case known to Mr. G—, lady H—, &c.' So we did more than once; but we could not pull money from them whether they would or no. Therefore these reasons are of no weight.—You conclude with praying that God would remove pride and malice from amongst us. Of pride I have too much; of malice I have none: however the prayer is good and I thank you for it."

The other letter from which I shall give an extract, was written apparently to a gentleman of some rank and influence. "Some time since," says Mr. Wesley, "I was considering what you said, concerning the want of a plan in our societies. There is a good deal of truth in this remark. For though we have a plan, as to our spiritual economy (the several branches of which are particularly recited in the plain account of the people called Methodists) yet it is certain, we have barely the first outlines of a plan with regard to our temporal concerns. The reason is, I had no design for several years, to concern myself with temporals at all: and when I began to do this, it was wholly and solely with a view to relieve, not employ, the poor; except now and then, with respect to a small number; and even this I found was too great a burden for me, as requiring more money, more time, and more thought, than I could possibly spare. I say, than I could possibly spare: for the whole weight lay on me. If I left it to others, it surely came to nothing. They wanted either understanding, or industry, or love, or patience, to bring any thing to perfection.

"Thus far I thought it needful to explain myself with regard to the economy of our society. I am still to speak of your case, of my own, and of some who are dependent upon me.

"I do not recollect, for I kept no copy of my last, that I charged you with want of humility, or meekness. Doubtless these may be found in the most splendid palaces. But did they ever move a man to build a splendid palace? Upon what motive you did this, I know not: but you are to answer it to God, not to me.

"If your soul is as much alive to God, if your thirst after pardon and holiness is as strong, if you are as dead to the desire of the eye and the pride of life, as you were six or seven years ago, I rejoice; if not, I pray God you may; and then you will know how to value a real friend.

"With regard to myself, you do well to warn me against 'popularity, a thirst of power, and of applause; against envy, producing a

seeming contempt for the conveniences or grandeur of this life; against an affected humility; against sparing from myself to give to others, from no other motive than ostentation.' I am not conscious to myself that this is my case. However, the warning is always friendly; and it is always seasonable, considering how deceitful my heart is, and how many the enemies that surround me.—What follows I do not understand. You behold me in the ditch, wherein you helped, though innocently, to cast me, and with a *levitical* pity, 'passing by on the other side.'—'He and you, sir, have not any merit, though Providence should permit all these sufferings to work together for my good.'—I do not comprehend one line of this, and therefore cannot plead either guilty, or not guilty.——I presume, they are some that are dependent on me, 'Who, you say, keep not the commandments of God; who show a repugnance to serve and obey; who are as full of pride and arrogance, as of filth and nastiness; who do not pay lawful debts, nor comply with civil obligations; who make the waiting on the officers of religion, a plea for sloth and idleness; who after I had strongly recommended them, did not perform their moral duty, but increased the number of those incumbrances which they forced on you, against your will.'—To this, I can only say, 1. I know not whom you mean; I am not certain that I can so much as guess at one of them. 2. Whoever they are, had they followed my instructions, they would have acted in a quite different manner. 3. If you will tell me them by name, I will renounce all fellowship with them."—This letter gives us a pleasing view of the command Mr. Wesley had acquired over his own temper; nothing but kindness and civility appear in it; there is no keen retort for any charge brought against himself; and nothing but tender concern for those who had not acted worthy of the character which he had given them.

October 19, Mr. Wesley returned to London, and the next day found himself out of order. In a short time his complaint put on the appearance of an ague. Before he was perfectly recovered, he once or twice catched cold, and was presently threatened with a rapid consumption. November 26, Dr. Fothergill told him he must not stay in town one day longer: that if any thing would do him good, it must be the country air, with rest, ass's milk, and riding daily. In consequence of this advice he retired to Lewisham. Here, not knowing how it might please God to dispose of him, and wishing "to prevent vile panegyrick" in case of death, he wrote as follows:

"Here lieth
The body of John Wesley,
A brand plucked out of the burning:
Who died of a consumption in the fifty-first year of his age.
Not leaving, after his debts are paid, ten pounds behind him:
Praying,
God be merciful to me an unprofitable servant!"

"He ordered that this, if any inscription, should be placed on his tomb-stone."

January 1, 1754, he returned to London, and the next day set out for the Hot Wells, near Bristol, to drink the water. On the 6th, he began writing notes on the New Testament; "A work," says he, "I should scarce ever have attempted, had I not been so ill as not to be able to travel or preach, and yet so well as to be able to read and write."—In April, he returned to London, and immediately retired to Paddington. Here he observes, "In my hours of walking, I read Dr. Calamy's Abridgment of Mr. Baxter's Life.* What a scene is opened here! In spite of all the prejudice of education, I could not but see, that the poor Nonconformists had been used without either justice or mercy: and that many of the Protestant bishops of King Charles, had neither more religion nor humanity, than the Popish

* Richard Baxter, an eminent divine among the Nonconformists, was born at Rowton in Shropshire, November 12, 1615. He distinguished himself by his examplary life, his pacific and moderate principles, and his numerous writings. Upon the opening of the long parliament, he was chosen vicar of Kidderminster. When Oliver Cromwell was made Protector, he would by no means comply with his measures, though he preached once before him. He came to London just before the deposing of Richard Cromwell, and preached before the parliament, the day before they voted the return of King Charles II. who, upon his restoration, appointed him one of his chaplains in ordinary. He assisted at the Conference in the Savoy, as one of the commissioners for stating the fundamentals in religion, and then drew up a reformed Liturgy. He was offered the bishoprick of Hereford; but this he refused, desiring no higher preferment than to be continued the minister of Kidderminster. He did not obtain, however, his humble request, being not permitted to preach there, above twice or thrice after the restoration. In 1662, Mr. Baxter was married to Margaret Charleton, the daughter of Francis Charleton, Esq. of the county of Salop, who was esteemed one of the best justices of the peace in the county. She was a woman of great piety, and fully entered into her husband's views of religion. In 1682, he was seized for coming within five miles of a corporation: and in the reign of King James II. he was committed to the King's Bench prison, and tried before the infamous Jeffries for his paraphrase on the New Testament, which, in the true spirit of the times, was called a *scandalous* and *seditious* book against the government. He continued in prison two years, when he was discharged, and had his fine remitted by the king. He died in December, 1691.

Mr. Baxter was honored with the friendship of some of the greatest and best men in the kingdom; as the earl of Balcarras, lord chief justice Hales, Dr. Tillotson, &c. He wrote above one hundred and twenty books, and had above sixty written against him. The former, however, were greatly superior to the latter, since Dr. Barrow, an excellent judge, says, that "His practical writings were never mended, his controversial seldom refuted."

Mr. Granger says, "Richard Baxter was a man famous for weakness of body and strength of mind; for having the strongest sense of religion himself, and exciting a sense of it in the thoughtless and profligate. He spoke, disputed, and wrote with ease; and discovered the same intrepidity, when he reproved Cromwell and expostulated with Charles II. as when he preached to a congregation of mechanics. He was just the same man before he went into a prison, while he was in it, and when he came out of it. This is a very imperfect sketch of Mr. Baxter's character: men of his size are not to be drawn in miniature." Among his most famous works were, 1. The Saint's Everlasting Rest. 2. Call to the unconverted, of which twenty thousand were sold in one year; and it was translated, not only into all the European tongues, but into the Indian. 3. Poor Man's Family Book. 4. Dying Thoughts. 5. A Paraphrase on the New Testament. His practical works have been printed in four volumes, folio.

bishops of Queen Mary."—On reading Mr. Baxter's history of the councils, Mr. Wesley uses very strong words indeed. "It is utterly astonishing," says he, "and would be wholly incredible, but that his vouchers are beyond all exception. What a company of execrable wretches have they been (one cannot give them a milder title) who have, almost in every age since St. Cyprian, taken upon them to govern the Church! How has one council been perpetually cursing another; and delivering all over to satan, whether predecessors or cotemporaries who did not implicitly receive their determinations, though generally trifling, sometimes false, and frequently unintelligible, or self-contradictory! Surely Mahometanism was let loose to reform the Christians! I know not, but Constantinople has gained by the change."—It is natural to observe here what the history of mankind uniformly shows, that, where the people have no balance of power in the government of the church, or of religious societies, to be used as a check against any undue influence of their teachers, the ministers, or preachers of the gospel, become in the end haughty, tyrannical, and intolerant; and their councils, assemblies, or conferences, degenerate into mere combinations against the natural rights and liberties of those over whom they assume any authority.

May 6, 1755, the Conference began at Leeds. "The point," says Mr. Wesley, "on which we desired all the preachers to speak their minds at large, was, whether we ought to separate from the church? What was advanced on one side or the other, was seriously and calmly considered: and on the third day we were all fully agreed in that general conclusion, That whether it was lawful or not, it was no ways expedient."

On the 13th, he rode on to Newcastle, where he did not find things in the order he expected. "Many," says he, "were on the point of leaving the church, which some had done already; and as they supposed on my authority! O how much discord is caused by one jarring string! How much trouble by one man, who does not walk by the same rule, and agree in the same judgment with his brethren." —It appears from these words, that some unjustifiable arts had already been made use of, to unsettle the minds of the people. How infectious is such a disease! Yet I hope it has not become epidemic.

Mr. Wesley proceeds. "August 6, I mentioned to our congregation in London, a means of increasing serious religion, which had been frequently practised by our forefathers, the joining in a covenant to serve God with all our heart and with all our soul. I explained this for several mornings following; and on Friday many of us kept a fast unto the Lord, beseeching him to give us wisdom and strength, that we might 'promise unto the Lord our God and keep it.' On Monday at six in the evening we met for that purpose, at the French church in Spitalfields. After I had recited the tenor of the covenant proposed, in the words of that blessed man, Richard

Allen, all the people stood up, in token of assent, to the number of about eighteen hundred. Such a night I scarce ever knew before. Surely the fruit of it shall remain forever."—The covenant has been renewed once every year, I believe, since this period.

January, 1756. The general expectation of public calamities in the ensuing year, spread a general seriousness over the nation. "We endeavored," says Mr. Wesley, "in every part of the kingdom, to avail ourselves of the apprehensions which we frequently found it was impossible to remove, in order to make them conducive to a nobler end, to that 'fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom.' And at this season I wrote, 'An Address to the Clergy,' which, considering the situation of public affairs, I judged would be more seasonable, and more easily borne, at this time than at any other."—February 6, "The fast-day was a glorious day, every church in the city was more than full: and a solemn seriousness sat on every face. Surely God heareth the prayer: and there will yet be a 'lengthening of our tranquillity.'—Even the Jews observed this day with a peculiar solemnity. The form of prayer which was used in their synagogue, began, 'Come and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn and he will heal us;' and concluded with those remarkable words: 'Incline the heart of our sovereign lord King George, as well as the hearts of his lords and counsellors, to use us kindly, and all our brethren the children of Israel: that in his days and in our days we may see the restoration of Judah, and that Israel may dwell in safety, and the Redeemer may come to Zion. May it be thy will! And we all say Amen."

In the latter end of March, he visited Ireland again, and after seeing the societies in Leinster and Munster, went with Mr. Walsh into the province of Connaught. July 19, he first set foot into the province of Ulster. But several of the preachers had been laboring in various parts of it for some years, and had seen much fruit of their labors. Many sinners had been convinced of the error of their ways; many, truly converted to God: and a considerable number of these, had united together in order to strengthen each other's hands in God.

August 25, Mr. Wesley came to Bristol, where he found about fifty preachers, who had come from various parts of the country to hold a Conference, which was opened the next day. The rules of the society, the band rules, and the rules of Kingswood School, were severally read and re-considered, and it was agreed to observe and enforce them.

The first and leading principle in the economy of Methodism, from its commencement to the present time, was not to form the people into a separate party; but to leave every individual member of the society at full liberty to continue in his former religious connexion: nay, leaving every one under a kind of necessity of doing so, for the ordinance of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Having established

their societies on this principle, the Methodists became a kind of middle link between all the religious parties in the nation, gently drawing them nearer together by uniting them all in the interests of experimental religion and scriptural holiness. They formed a kind of central point, from which the rays of gospel light issued forth, not in one direction alone, to eradiate only one point of their circumference, but in all directions, equally enlightening every part of their periphery. But two or three of the preachers, who had acquired some influence with the people, had for some time been dissatisfied with this middle situation; the being no party, but standing in an equal relation to all, as *fellow-helpers to the truth.* We may observe, that this dissatisfaction originated with a few ambitious preachers, and from them spread, like a contagious disease, to the people. This was the case at first, and has always been the case since, wherever the people have desired any alteration in the original constitution of the Methodist societies. The method of proceeding, even to the present time, to effect their purpose, is rather curious, and shows to what wretched means men will sometimes resort, to support a bad cause. For as soon as these preachers had by various arts, influenced a few persons in any society to desire to receive the Lord's Supper from them, they pleaded this circumstance as a reason why the innovation should take place; pretending they only wished to satisfy the desires of the people, not their own restless ambition. As a vast majority in these societies were members of the Church of England, so the forming of the Methodists into a separate party, was called a separating them from the church; though it evidently implied a change in their relative situation to all denominations of Dissenters, as much as to the church. The clamor, however, for a separation from the church, had been raised so high by a few of the preachers, that the subject was fully discussed for two or three days together, at this Conference; and Mr. Wesley observes, "My brother and I closed the Conference by a solemn declaration of our purpose never to separate from the church."

The regular clergy, who had embraced the leading doctrines of the Methodists, generally disapproved of lay-preachers, and of the plan of itinerancy; fearing, with the rest of the clergy, that in the end a large rent would be made from the established church. In September, Mr. Wesley received a letter on this subject from the reverend and pious Mr. Walker of Truro, pressing him to get the ablest preachers ordained, and to fix the rest in different societies, not as preachers but as readers, and thus break up the itinerant plan. Mr. Wesley answered, "I have one point in view, to promote, so far as I am able, vital, practical religion; and by the grace of God, to beget, preserve, and increase, the life of God in the souls of men. On this single principle I have hitherto proceeded, and taken no step but in subserviency to it. With this view, when I found it to be absolutely

necessary for the continuance of the work which God had begun in many souls (which their *regular pastors* generally used all possible means to destroy) I permitted several of their brethren, whom I believed God had called thereto, and qualified for the work, to comfort, exhort, and instruct those who were athirst for God, or who walked in the light of his countenance. But as the persons so qualified were few, and those who wanted their assistance very many, it followed that most of them were obliged to travel continually from place to place; and this occasioned several regulations from time to time, which were chiefly made at our Conferences.

"So great a blessing has from the beginning attended the labors of these itinerants, that we have been more and more convinced every year, of the more than lawfulness of this proceeding. And the inconveniences, most of which we foresaw from the very first, have been both fewer and smaller than we expected.—But the question is, 'How may these (preachers) be settled on such a footing, as one would wish they might be after my death;' it is a weighty point, and has taken up many of my thoughts for several years: but I know nothing yet. The steps I am now to take are plain; I see broad light shining upon them; but the other part of the prospect I cannot see: clouds and darkness rest upon it.

"Your *general* advice on this head, 'To follow my own conscience, without any regard to consequences or prudence, so called, is unquestionably right. And it is a rule which I have closely followed for many years, and hope to follow to my life's end. The first of your *particular* advice is, 'To keep in full view the interests of Christ's church in general, and of practical religion; not considering the Church of England, or the cause of Methodism, but as subordinate thereto.' This advice I have punctually observed from the beginning, as well as at our late Conference. You advise, 2. 'To keep in view also, the unlawfulness of a separation from the Church of England.' To this likewise I agree. It cannot be lawful to separate from it, unless it be unlawful to continue in it. You advise, 3. 'Fully to declare myself on this head, and to suffer no dispute concerning it.' The very same thing I wrote to my brother from Ireland: and we have declared ourselves without reserve.—Your last advice is, 'That as many of our preachers as are fit for it, be ordained; and that the others be fixed to certain societies, not as preachers, but as readers or inspectors.'—But is that which you propose a better way (than our itinerant plan)? This should be coolly and calmly considered.

"If I mistake not, there are now in the county of Cornwall, about four and thirty of these little societies, part of whom now experience the love of God; part are more or less earnestly seeking it. Four preachers, Peter Jaco, Thomas Johnson, W. Crabb, and Will. Atwood, design for the ensuing year, partly to call other sinners to repentance; but chiefly to feed and guide those few feeble sheep: to forward them,

as the ability which God giveth, in vital, practical religion. Now suppose we can effect that P. Jaco, and T. Johnson, be ordained and settled in the curacies of Buryan, and St. Just: and suppose W. Crabb, and W. Atwood, fix at Launceston or the Dock, as readers and inspectors; will this answer the end which I have in view, so well as travelling through the country?

"It will not answer so well, even with regard to those societies with whom P. Jaco, and T. Johnson, have settled. Be their talents ever so great, they will ere long, grow dead themselves, and so will most of those who hear them. I know, were I myself to preach one whole year in one place, I should preach both myself and most of my congregation asleep. Nor can I believe, it was ever the will of our Lord, that any congregation should have only one teacher. We have found by long and constant experience, that a frequent change of teachers is best. This preacher has one talent, that another. No one whom I ever yet knew, has all the talents which are needful for beginning, continuing, and perfecting the work of grace in a whole congregation.

"But suppose this would better answer the end with regard to those two societies, would it answer in those where W. Atwood, and W. Crabb, were settled as inspectors or readers? First, who shall feed them with the milk of the word? The ministers of their parishes? Alas, they cannot: they themselves neither know, nor live, nor teach the gospel. These readers? Can then, either they, or I, or you, always find something to read to our congregation, which will be as exactly adapted to their wants, and as much blessed to them as our preaching? and there is another difficulty still; what authority have I to forbid their doing what, I believe, God has called them to do? I apprehend, indeed, that there ought, if possible, to be both an outward and inward call to this work: yet if one of the two be supposed wanting, I had rather want the outward than the inward call.

"But waving this, and supposing these four societies to be better provided for than they were before; what becomes of the other thirty? Will they prosper as well when they are left as sheep without a shepherd? The experiment has been tried again and again; and always with the same event: even the strong in faith grew weak and faint; many of the weak made shipwreck of the faith; the awakened fell asleep; and sinners, changed for a while, returned as a dog to his vomit. And so, by our lack of service, many souls perished for whom Christ died. Now had we willingly withdrawn our service from them, by voluntarily settling in one place, what account of this could we have given to the great Shepherd of all our souls? I cannot therefore see, how any of those four preachers, or any others in like circumstances, can ever, while they have health and strength, ordained or unordained, fix in one place without a grievous wound to their own conscience, and damage to the general work of God."

On the same day, that he wrote the above letter, he also wrote to

Mr. Norton, who, in a letter written about a week before, had charged him with 1. "Self-inconsistency, in tolerating lay-preaching, and not tolerating lay-administering: and 2. With showing a spirit of persecution, in denying his brethren the liberty of acting, as well as thinking, according to their own conscience."

With regard to the first, Mr. Wesley allowed the charge, but denied the consequence. He declared, that he acted on the same principle, in tolerating the one, and in prohibiting the other. "My principle," said he, "is this, I submit to every ordinance of man, wherever I do not conceive there is an absolute necessity for acting contrary to it. Consistently with this, I do tolerate lay-preaching, because I conceive there is an absolute necessity for it, inasmuch as were it not, thousands of souls would perish; yet I do not tolerate lay-administering, because I do not conceive there is any such necessity for it."

With regard to the second, Mr. Wesley observes, "I again allow the fact; but deny the consequence. I mean, I allow the fact thus far: some of our preachers who are not ordained, think it quite right to administer the Lord's supper, and believe it would do much good. I think it quite wrong, and believe it would do much hurt. Hereupon I say, I have no right over your conscience, nor you over mine; therefore both you and I must follow our own conscience. You believe, it is a duty to administer: do so, and herein follow your own conscience. I verily believe it is a sin: which consequently, I dare not tolerate: and herein I follow mine. Yet this is no persecution, were I to separate from our society, those who practise what I believe is contrary to the word and destructive of the work of God."

In December, Mr. Wesley wrote to a friend as follows: "I do not see that diocesian episcopacy is necessary, but I do, that it is highly expedient. But whether it were or no, the spirit shown in those verses, is wrong from end to end.

"Neither J. E—— nor any other separatist, can ever be expected to own prejudice, pride, or interest, to be his motive. Nevertheless, I do and must blame every one of them, for the act of separating. Afterwards, I leave them to God.

"The Apostles had not the lordships, or the revenues, but they had the office of diocesan bishops. But let that point sleep: we have things to think of, which are, *magis ad nos*. Keep from proselyting others; and keep your opinion till doomsday; stupid, self-inconsistent, unprimitive, and unscriptural as it is.

"I have spoken my judgment concerning lay-administering, at large, both to C. P—— and N. Norton. I went as far as I could with a safe conscience. I must follow my conscience, and they their own. They who dissuade people from attending the church and sacrament, do certainly, 'draw them from the church.'"

Mr. Wesley's travels and labors of love, in preaching the gospel of peace through most parts of the three kingdoms, were continued with

the same unremitting diligence, while the duties of his situation in some other respects, increased every year upon him. New societies were frequently formed in various places; which naturally called for an increase of preachers. These, however, were more easily procured, than a stranger would imagine. The class and band meetings were a fruitful nursery, where the most zealous and pious young men soon grew up to the requisite standard, to be transplanted into a higher situation, among the local or itinerant preachers. But as the body increased, it became a more difficult task to regulate its economy, so as to preserve an equilibrium through all its parts, on which the health and vigor of the whole depended. The body became like a large machine, whose movements were exceedingly complex: and it depended on Mr. Wesley, not only to give the necessary impulse to put the whole in motion, but also everywhere to govern and direct its motions to the purposes intended. This required great and continued attention, and a very extensive correspondence both with preachers and people through the whole connexion. All this, however, he performed, by allotting to every hour of the day, wherever he was, its due proportion of labor.—From the present year, I find little more than a recurrence of circumstances similar to those already related, till we come to the year 1760; when religious experience, or at least the profession of it, began to assume an appearance among the Methodists, in some respects quite new. The doctrine of justification, from 1738, had always been well understood among them; and from the time Mr. Wesley preached his sermon on the 'circumcision of the heart,' in 1733, before he understood the nature of justification, he had always held the doctrine of christian perfection; which he explained by, loving God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves: that a person in this state felt nothing, in all situations, but the pure love of God, and perfect submission to his will; and nothing but benevolence, or good-will to men. He never called this a state of sinless perfection, because he believed there might still be errors in conduct arising from ignorance, which yet were consistent with pure love to God, and good-will to men. He did not suppose, that any man could stand for one moment accepted of God, but by faith in Christ Jesus, through whom alone, his person and his actions, in the highest state of perfection attainable in this life, can be accepted of God.

But, though Mr. Wesley had so long held the doctrine of christian perfection, he had not always held that this state might be attained in one moment; much less that a person might attain it in his novitiate: nor do I know that there were any professors of it before this time, except when death was approaching. In the beginning of this year, however, there being a great revival of a religious concern among the societies in Yorkshire, several professed, that at once, during prayer, their hearts were cleansed from all sin: that they were cleansed from all unrighteousness, or perfected in love: all which,

were with them synonymous phrases. "Here," says Mr. Wesley, began that glorious work of sanctification, which had been nearly at a stand for twenty years. But from time to time it spread, first through various parts of Yorkshire, afterwards in London; then through most parts of England: next through Dublin, Limerick, and all the South and West of Ireland. And wherever the work of sanctification increased, the whole work of God increased in all its branches. Many were convinced of sin; many justified; and many backsliders healed."

We may observe that Mr. Wesley, believing these professors of an instantaneous deliverance from all sin were sincere, gave full credit to their report; and upon this, and the concurring testimony of others which soon followed, he seems to have built his doctrine of an instantaneous attainment of christian perfection. Against the doctrine itself, as explained above, there does not seem to lie any just objection: but this instantaneous manner of attaining perfection in the Christian temper, seems to have no foundation in Scripture: it even appears contrary to reason, and to the constitution and order which God has established through all animated nature, where we see no instance of any thing arriving at perfection in a moment. And though there can be no doubt but some of those who made profession of this happy state were both sincere and deeply pious, perhaps beyond most of their brethren, yet there seems just reason to affirm they were mistaken in the judgment they formed of their own attainments.

In the spring and summer of this year, Mr. Wesley spent several months in Ireland. He staid about twenty days in Dublin, and then visited most parts of the kingdom. Dr. Barnard, then Bishop of Derry, was a warm friend to religion, and being convinced of Mr. Wesley's sincerity in his indefatigable labors to promote it, had a very sincere regard for him. The bishop being disappointed in not seeing him when in Dublin, sent him the following letter.

"Reverend Sir,

"It would have given me a very sincere pleasure to have seen you during your stay in Dublin; and I am concerned to find, that your having entertained any doubt of it, deprived me of that satisfaction. Indeed I did not expect your stay would have been so short.

"Whether your expression, of our meeting no more on this side of eternity, refers to your design of quitting your visits to Ireland, or to any increase of bodily weakness, I do not read it without tender regret: however, that must be submitted to the disposal of Providence.—I pray God to bless you, and supply every want, and sanctify every suffering.

I am, Reverend Sir,
Your loving brother and servant,
W. Derry."

In March, 1761, Mr. Wesley set out for the North. In these journies he generally took a very large circuit, passing through the principal societies in most of the counties. He now visited several parts of Scotland, as far as Aberdeen: was favorably received, and, in England, especially, saw the work in which he was engaged every where increasing. In the beginning of July, he came to York, on his return, and was desired to call on a poor prisoner in the castle. "I had formerly," says Mr. Wesley, "occasion to take notice of an hideous monster, called a Chancery Bill: I now saw the fellow to it, called a Declaration. The plain fact was this. Some time since, a man who lived near Yarm, assisted others in running some brandy. His share was worth near four pounds. After he had wholly left off that bad work, and was following his own business, that of a weaver, he was arrested, and sent to York gaol. And not long after comes down a declaration, 'That Jac. Wh—— had landed a vessel laden with brandy and geneva, at the port of London, and sold them there, whereby he was indebted to his Majesty five hundred and seventy-seven pounds, and upwards.' And to tell this worthy story, the lawyer takes up thirteen or fourteen sheets of treble stampt paper.

"O England, England! Will this reproach never be rolled away from thee? Is there any thing like this to be found, either among Papists, Turks, or Heathens? In the name of justice, mercy, and common sense, I ask, 1. Why do men lie, for lying sake? Is it only to keep their hands in? What need else of saying it was the port of London? when every one knew the brandy was landed, above three hundred miles from thence. What a monstrous contempt of truth does this show, or rather hatred to it? 2. Where is the justice of swelling four pounds, into five hundred and seventy-seven? 3. Where is the common sense, of taking up fourteen sheets to tell a story, that may be told in ten lines? 4. Where is the mercy of thus grinding the face of the poor? Thus sucking the blood of a poor beggared prisoner. Would not this be execrable villany, if the paper and writing together were only sixpence a sheet, when they have stript him already of his little all, and not left him fourteen groats in the world?"

It is certain that nothing can be fairly said in defence of some of our law proceedings. They are often absurd, highly oppressive to the subject, and disgraceful to a civilized nation. In criminal cases, how often does the indictment magnify and exaggerate both the crime and every circumstance connected with it, beyond all the bounds of truth and probability? Hence it becomes extremely difficult for jurymen to discharge their duty with a good conscience; and we seldom see punishments duly proportioned to the crimes committed. What shall we say in other cases, where the tautology and circumlocution peculiar to the language of our law, the delay of judgment in some of the courts, and the chicanery permitted through the whole proceedings, render it almost impossible for an honest subject in a middling situation, to

obtain his right against a villain, without the utmost danger of being ruined? A man who robs on the highway is hanged; but a villain who robs by means of the chicanery, delay, and expense of the law, escapes with impunity. The grievances so loudly complained of at present, appear to me, in comparison of this, like a mole-hill compared with a mountain.

The doctrine of an instantaneous attainment of christian perfection spread rapidly, and numerous professors of it almost instantly sprung up, in various parts of the kingdom. But the imprudent zeal, and rash expressions of some of the preachers concerning it, soon began to give offence. July 23, Mr. Grimshaw wrote to Mr. Wesley on the subject, and after apologizing for not attending the Conference then held at Leeds, he observes, "The disappointment is more my own loss than yours: for there are several things which have for some time been matter of so much uneasiness to me, that I thought, could they not at this time be some how accommodated, I should be obliged to recede from the connexion; which to do, would have been one of the most disagreeable things in the world to me.—I would fain live and die in this happy relation I have for many years borne, and still bear to you.

"Two of the most material points were, concerning imputed righteousness, and christian perfection. But as to the former, what you declared to be your notion of it, at Heptonstal, is so near mine that I am well satisfied. And as to the other, your resolutions in Conference are such, if John Emmot informs me right, as seem to afford me sufficient satisfaction.

"There are other matters more, but to me not of equal importance, to which, notwithstanding, I cannot be reconciled. Such as asserting, 'a child of God to be again a child of the devil, if he give away to a temptation.—That he is a child of the devil who disbelieves the doctrine of sinless perfection.—That he is no true Christian, who has not attained to it,' &c. &c. These are assertions very common with some of our preachers, though in my apprehension too absurd and ridiculous to be regarded, and therefore by no means of equal importance with what is above said; and yet have a tendency, as the effect has already shown, to distract and divide our societies.—You will perhaps say, 'Why did you not admonish them? Why did you not endeavor to convince them of the error of such absurd assertions?'—In some degree I have, thought perhaps not so fully or freely as I ought or could have wished to have done: for I feared to be charged by them, perhaps secretly to yourself, with opposing them or their doctrines.—These things I mentioned to brother Lee, who declared, and I could not but believe him, that you did, and would utterly reject any such expressions. I am therefore, in these respects more easy; and shall if such occasions require, as I wish they never may, reprove and prevent them with plainness and freedom.

"*Sinless** perfection is a grating term to many of our dear brethren; even to those who are as desirous and solicitous to be truly holy in heart and life, as any perhaps of them who affect to speak in this unscriptural way. Should we not discountenance the use of it, and advise its votaries to exchange it for terms less offensive, but sufficiently expressive of true christian holiness? By this I mean (and why may I not tell you what I mean?) all that holiness of heart and life, which is literally, plainly, abundantly, taught us all over the Bible; and without which no man, however justified through faith in the righteousness of Christ, can ever expect to see the Lord.—This is that holiness, that christian perfection, that sanctification, which, without affecting strange, fulsome, offensive, unscriptural expressions and representations, I, and I dare say every true and sincere-hearted member in our societies, and I hope in all others, ardently desire and strenuously labor to attain.—This is attainable—for this therefore let us contend: to this let us diligently exhort and excite all our brethren daily; and this the more as we see the day, the happy, the glorious day approaching.

"I have only to add, that I am determined through the help of God, so far as I know, or see at present, to continue in close connexion with you, even unto death: and to be as useful as I am able, or as consistent with my parochial, and other indispensable obligations: chiefly in this round (circuit) and at times abroad; to strengthen your hands in the great and glorious work of our LORD, which you have evidently so much at heart, elaborately so much in hand, and in which, He, blessed forever be his name, has so extensively and wonderfully prospered you."

Immediately on the receipt of this letter, before the Conference quite broke up, Mr. Wesley took an opportunity of preaching from those words, 'In many things we offend all.' On this occasion he observed, 1. "As long as we live, our soul is connected with the body. 2. As long as it is thus connected, it cannot think but by the help of bodily organs. 3. As long as these organs are imperfect, we are liable to mistakes, both speculative and practical: 4. Yea, and a mistake may occasion my loving a good man less than I ought; which is a defective, that is, a wrong temper. 5. For all these we need the atoning blood, as indeed for every defect or omission. Therefore, 6. All men have need to say daily, Forgive us our trespasses."

During the following years, there was much noise throughout the societies concerning perfection: but more especially in London, where two or three persons who stood at the head of those professing to have attained that state, fell into some extravagant notions and ways of expression, more proper to be heard in Bedlam than in a religious society. One of the persons here alluded to, was George Bell, who

* It is observed above, that Mr. Wesley himself never used the term *sinless* perfection.

was favored by Mr. Maxfield; and they soon made a party in their favor.—When the plain declarations of Scripture are disregarded, or even tortured by ingenuity or a wild imagination to a false meaning, what opinions can be so absurd, either in religion or philosophy, as not to find advocates for them? But this affords no just ground of objection against scriptural Christianity, or true christian experience; any more than against sound philosophy. In the history of philosophers and of philosophy, we find opinions maintained, as absurd as the most illiterate enthusiast in religion ever published; nay as absurd as transubstantiation itself. And when religion has had the misfortune to fall under the sole direction of these philosophers, and been constrained by violence to put on their philosophic dress, she has had just cause to complain of as great an insult as ever she experienced from the most ignorant enthusiast. So little justice is there in the proud claim of reason in her present imperfect state, to assume the whole direction of our most holy religion! And so little cause has she, to triumph over the errors of a few mistaken professors of christian experience!

Mr. Wesley did not, at first, resist these extravagances with sufficient firmness; by which the persons who favored them daily increased in number. At length, however, he found it absolutely necessary to give an effectual check to the party: but now it was too late to be done, without the risk of a separation in the society. This, being the least of the two evils, accordingly took place: Mr. Maxfield withdrew from his connexion with Mr. Wesley, and carried near two hundred of the people with him.

During this contest, Mr. Wesley being at Canterbury, wrote to Mr. Maxfield, telling him very freely what he approved, and what he disapproved in his doctrine or behavior. Among a variety of other things, Mr. Wesley tells him, "I like your doctrine of perfection, or pure love.—I dislike the saying, This was not known or taught among us, till within two or three years."—On this, I shall just observe, that the doctrine of perfection, or perfect love, was undoubtedly taught among the Methodists from the beginning: but the manner in which it was now preached, pressing the people to expect what was called the destruction of the root of sin, in one moment, was most certainly new; I can find no trace of it before the period at which I have fixed its introduction.*

* It will be proper before we proceed any further, to give a short account of that excellent man, and successful minister of Christ, the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw. He was born in September, 1708, at Brindle, six miles from Preston in Lancashire, and educated at the schools of Blackburn and Heskin, in the same county. Even then, the thoughts of death and judgment made some impression upon him. At the age of eighteen he was sent to Christ's-College in Cambridge; where bad example so carried him away, that he utterly lost all sense of seriousness. In 1731, he was ordained deacon, and seemed much affected with the importance of the ministerial office. This was increased by conversing with some serious people at Rochdale; but on his removal to Todmorden soon after, he dropped his

At this time the societies were so multiplied, and so widely spread, that they formed twenty-five extensive circuits in England, eight in Ireland, four in Scotland, and two in Wales: on which, I suppose, about ninety preachers were daily employed in propagating knowledge and christian experience, among the lower orders of the people.

March 12, Mr. Wesley left London, and on the 16th came to Bristol, where he met several serious clergymen. He observes, "I have long desired that there might be an open, avowed union, between all who preach those fundamental truths, original sin, and justification by faith, producing inward and outward holiness. But all my endeavors have been hitherto ineffectual."—In April, however, he made one more attempt to promote so desirable an union. He wrote the following letter, which after some time he sent to between thirty and forty clergymen, with the little preface annexed.

pious acquaintance, conformed to the world, followed all its diversions, and contented himself with doing his duty on Sundays.

About the year 1734, he began to think seriously again. He left off all diversions, began to catechise the young people, to preach the absolute necessity of a devout life, and to visit his parishioners, to press them to seek the salvation of their souls. At this period also, he began to pray in secret four times a day: and the God of all grace, who prepared his heart to pray, soon gave the answer to his prayer. Not indeed as he expected: not in joy or peace, but by bringing upon him strong and painful convictions of his own guilt, helplessness, and misery; by discovering to him what he did not suspect before, that his heart was deceitful and desperately wicked; and, what was more afflicting still, that all his duties and labors could not procure him pardon, or give him a title to eternal life. In this trouble he continued more than three years, not acquainting any one with the distress he suffered. But one day, in 1742, being in the utmost agony of mind, he had so strong and clear a view of Jesus Christ in his mediatorial character, that he was enabled to believe on him with the heart unto righteousness; and in a moment all his fears vanished away, and he was filled with joy unspeakable. "I was now," says he, "willing to renounce myself, and to embrace Christ for my all in all."—All this time he was an entire stranger to the people called Methodists, and also to their writings, till he came to Haworth. Mr. Grimshaw was now too happy himself in the knowledge of Christ to rest satisfied, without taking every method he thought likely, to spread the knowledge of his God and Saviour. For the sake of the very indigent, who wanted clothes to appear decent at church in the day-time, he contrived a lecture on the Sunday evenings, though he had before preached twice in the day. The next year he began a method, which he continued till death, of preaching in each of the four hamlets under his care, three times every month. By this means, the old and infirm, had the truth of God brought to their houses. The success of his labors, soon brought many persons from the neighboring parishes to attend on his ministry; and the benefit they obtained, brought upon him many earnest entreaties to come to their houses, and expound the word of God to souls as ignorant as they had been themselves. This request he did not dare to refuse; so that, while he provided abundantly for his own flock, he annually found opportunity of preaching near three hundred times, to congregations in other parts.

For a course of fifteen years, or upwards, he used to preach every week, fifteen, twenty, and sometimes thirty times, besides visiting the sick, and other occasional duties of his function. In sixteen years he was only once suspended from his labors by sickness, though he dared all weather upon the bleak mountains, and used his body with less compassion, than a merciful man would use his beast. He was exceedingly beloved by all his parishioners, many of whom could not hear his name mentioned after his death without shedding tears. Triumphing in Him who is the resurrection and the life, he died, April 7th, 1762, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and the twenty-first of eminent usefulness.

"REVEREND SIR,

"Near two years and a half ago, I wrote the following letter. You will please to observe, 1. That I propose no more therein, than is the bounden duty of every Christian: 2. That *you* may comply with this proposal, whether any other does or not. I myself have endeavored so to do for many years, though I have been almost alone therein; and although many, the more earnestly I *talk of peace* the more zealously *make themselves ready for battle.* I am,

Reverend Sir,

Your affectionate brother,

JOHN WESLEY."

"DEAR SIR,

"It has pleased God to give you both the will and the power to do many things for his glory, although you are often ashamed you have done so little, and wish you could do a thousand times more. This induces me to mention to you, what has been upon my mind for many years: and what I am persuaded would be much for the glory of God, if it could once be effected. And I am in great hopes it will be, if you heartily undertake it, trusting in him alone.

"Some years since God began a great work in England; but the laborers were few. At first those few were of one heart: but it was not so long. First one fell off, then another and another, till no two of us were left together in the work, besides my brother and me. This prevented much good, and occasioned much evil. It grieved our spirits, and weakened our hands. It gave our common enemies huge occasion to blaspheme. It perplexed and puzzled many sincere Christians. It caused many to draw back to perdition. It grieved the holy spirit of God.

"As laborers increased, disunion increased. Offences were multiplied. And instead of coming nearer to, they stood further and further off from each other: till at length, those who were not only brethren in Christ, but fellow-laborers in his gospel, had no more connexion or fellowship with each other, than Protestants have with Papists.

"But ought this to be? Ought not those who are united to one common head, and employed by him in one common work, to be united to each other? I speak now of those laborers, who are ministers of the Church of England. These are chiefly—Mr. Perronet, Romaine, Newton, Shirley: Mr. Downing, Jesse, Adam: Mr. Talbot, Ryland, Stillingfleet, Fletcher: Mr. Johnson, Baddeley, Andrews, Jane: Mr. Hart, Symes, Brown, Roquet: Mr. Sellon, Venn, Richardson, Burnet, Furley, Crook: Mr. Eastwood, Conyers, Bentley, King: Mr. Berridge, Hicks, G. W., J. W., C. W., John Richardson, Benjamin Colley.—Not excluding any other clergyman, who agrees in these essentials,

"I. Original sin. II. Justification by faith. III. Holiness of heart and life: provided his life be answerable to his doctrine.

"But *what union* would you desire among these? Not an union in *opinions*. They might agree or disagree, touching absolute decrees on the one hand, and perfection on the other.—Not an union in *expressions*. Those may still speak of the *imputed righteousness*, and these of the *merits of Christ*. Not an union with regard to *outward order*. Some may still remain *quite regular;* some *quite irregular;* and some *partly regular*, and *partly irregular*. But these things being as they are, as each is persuaded in his own mind, is it not a most desirable thing, that we should,

"1. Remove hindrances out of the way? Not *judge* one another, not *despise* one another, not *envy* one another? Not be *displeased* at one another's *gifts* or *success*, even though greater than our own? Not *wait* for one another's halting, much less *wish* for it, or *rejoice* therein?—Never *speak* disrespectfully, slightly, coldly, or unkindly of each other: never *repeat* each other's faults, mistakes, or infirmities, much less *listen* for and *gather* them up: never say or do anything to hinder each other's usefulness, either directly or indirectly.

"Is it not a most desirable thing, that we should, 2. Love *as brethren*? *Think well* of, and *honor* one another? *Wish* all good, all grace, all gifts, all success, yea greater than our own, to each other? *Expect* God will answer our wish, *rejoice* in every appearance thereof, and *praise* him for it? *Readily believe* good of each other, as readily as we once believed evil?—*Speak* respectfully, honorably, kindly, of each other: *defend* each other's character: speak all the good we can of each other: recommend one another where we have influence: each *help* the other on in his work, and *enlarge* his influence by all the honest means we can.

"This is the *union* which I have long sought after. And is it not the duty of every one of us so to do? Would it not be far better for *ourselves?* A means of promoting both our holiness and happiness? Would it not remove much *guilt* from those who have been faulty in any of these instances? And much *pain* from those who have kept themselves pure? Would it not be far better for the *people?* who suffer severely from the clashings of their leaders, which seldom fail to occasion many unprofitable, yea hurtful disputes among them. Would it not be better for the poor, blind *world*, robbing them of their sport? O they cannot agree among themselves! Would it not be better for the *whole work* of God, which would then deepen and widen on every side?

"'But it will never be: it is utterly impossible.' Certainly it is with *men*. Who imagines *we* can do this? That it can be effected by any human power? All *nature* is against it, every infirmity, every *wrong temper* and *passion;* love of honor and praise, of power, of preëminence; anger, resentment, pride; long-contracted habit, and prejudice, lurking in ten thousand forms. The devil and his angels are against it. For if this takes place, how shall his kingdom stand?

All *the world*, all that know not God are against it, though they may seem to favor it for a season. Let us settle this in our hearts, that we may be utterly cut off from all dependence on our own strength or wisdom.

"But surely 'with God all things are possible.' Therefore 'all things are possible to him that believeth.' And this union is proposed only to them that believe, and show their faith by their works.

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate servant,

J. W."

Scarborough, April 19, 1764.

This letter shows Mr. Wesley's tolerant principles in a strong light. Happy would it have been for the professors of religion, had the same spirit of brotherly-love and mutual forbearance, prevailed in the hearts of all who preached the essential doctrines of the gospel. But this was not the case: of all the clergymen to whom this desirable union was proposed, only three vouchsafed to return him an answer!

Mr. Wesley continued his travels and labors, with the usual diligence and punctuality through all the societies in Great Britain, Ireland, and Wales; and his health and strength were wonderfully preserved. In October, 1765, he observes, "I breakfasted with Mr. Whitefield, who seemed to be an old, old man, being fairly worn out in his Master's service, though he has hardly seen fifty years. And yet it pleases God, that I, who am now in my sixty-third year, find no disorder, no weakness, no decay, no difference from what I was at five and twenty: only that I have fewer teeth, and more grey hairs!" —Soon after he adds, "Mr. Whitefield called upon me. He breathes nothing but peace and love. Bigotry, cannot stand before him, but hides its head wherever he comes."

Mr. Wesley received sixty pounds per annum, from the society in London, which is the salary that every clergyman receives, who officiates among them. But individuals in various places frequently gave him money; legacies were sometimes left him, and the produce of his books, in the latter part of life was considerable. It is well known, however, that he hoarded nothing at the end of the year. He even contracted his expenses as much as possible, and gave the surplus to the poor, and those who might, through misfortunes, be in want. His charitable disposition may appear from the following little circumstance, which strongly points out the tender feelings of his mind, under a consciousness that he had not given in proportion to the person's want. In November, 1766, a foreigner in distress called upon him, and gave him a Latin letter, begging some relief. Shortly after, Mr. Wesley reflecting on the case, wrote on the back of the letter, "I let him go with five shillings: I fear he is starving. Alas!"

The world has seldom seen a man of strong powers of mind, of

first-rate talents, who has not labored under some peculiar weakness, or mental infirmity; which men of little minds, capable only of observing defects, have frequently made the object of ridicule. Numerous instances might easily be produced, both among philosophers and divines. Mr. Wesley's chief weakness was, a too great readiness to credit the testimony of others, when he believed them sincere, without duly considering whether they had sufficient ability and caution to form a true judgment of the things concerning which they bore testimony. In matters, therefore, which depended wholly on the evidence of other persons, he was often mistaken. Mr. Charles Wesley, was in the opposite extreme; full of caution and suspicion. But he was fully sensible both of his own, and of his brother's weakness, and in the present year, wrote to him as follows; "When you fear the worst, your fears should be regarded: and when I hope the best, you may almost believe me.—As to *several* of our preachers, I fear with *you*, 'The salt has lost its savor.' Where is their single eye now? Their zeal, humility, and love? And what can we do with them, or for them?" And again, some years afterwards, "Your defect of mistrust, needs my excess to guard it. You cannot be taken by storm, but you may by surprise. We seem designed for each other. If we could and would be oftener together, it might be better for both.—Let us be useful in our lives, and at our death not divided."

It was owing to the weakness above mentioned, that Mr. Wesley so easily believed most of the stories he heard, concerning witchcraft and apparitions. And though this is by many deemed a subject of ridicule rather than of serious argument, yet it is but just to let Mr. Wesley plead his own cause, and assign the reasons of his faith in the persons who have stated the appearance of departed spirits as a matter of fact, of which they themselves were the witnesses. This he did in 1768. After stating, that there were several things in these appearances which he did not comprehend, he adds, "But this is with me a very slender objection. For what is it which I do not comprehend, even of the things I see daily? Truly not 'the smallest grain of sand, or spire of grass.'—What pretence have I then to deny well-attested facts, because I cannot comprehend them?

"It is true likewise, that the English in general, and most of the men of learning in Europe, have given up all accounts of witches and apparitions, as mere old wives' fables. I am sorry for it: and I willingly take this opportunity of entering my solemn protest against this violent compliment, which so many that believe the Bible, pay to those who do not believe it. I owe them no such service. I take knowledge, these are at the bottom of the outcry which has been raised, and with such insolence spread throughout the nation in direct opposition not only to the Bible, but to the suffrage of the wisest and best of men in all ages and nations. They well know, whether

Christians know it or not, that the giving up witchcraft, is in effect giving up the Bible. And they know on the other hand, that if but one account of the intercourse of men with separate spirits be admitted, their whole castle in the air, Deism, Atheism, Materialism, falls to the ground. I know no reason therefore, why we should suffer even this weapon to be wrested out of our hands. Indeed there are numerous arguments besides, which abundantly confute their vain imaginations. But we need not be hooted out of one: neither reason or religion require this.

"One of the capital objections to all these accounts, which I have known urged over and over, is this, 'Did you ever see an apparition yourself?' No: nor did I ever see a murder. Yet I believe there is such a thing. Therefore I cannot as a reasonable man deny the fact; although I never saw it, and perhaps never may. The testimony of unexceptionable witnesses fully convinces me both of the one and the other."

I am very far from giving credit to the common reports of apparitions. Many of them, no doubt, are the mere creatures of imagination. We may observe, however, that no man ever did, or ever can prove by sound argument, the impossibility of disembodied spirits appearing to men, or that they never have appeared to individuals. All then, which the most able and determined skeptic can do, is, to oppose his own dark and uncertain conjectures to the uniform testimony of all ages and of all nations. He has not therefore, so much cause for triumph as he would have the world to suppose. I cannot do better than conclude this subject with the words of Dr. Johnson, in his Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia. "If all your fear be of apparitions, (said the prince,) I will promise you safety: there is no danger from the dead; he that is once buried will be seen no more."

"That the dead are seen no more (said Imlac) I will not undertake to maintain against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages, and of all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion, which prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth: those that never heard of one another, would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers, can very little weaken the general evidence: and some who deny it with their tongues, confess it by their fears."

In September this year, Mr. Wesley wrote the following letter to Mr. James Morgan, on a point of doctrine. "I have been thinking much of you," says Mr. Wesley, "and why should I not tell you all I think and all I fear concerning you?

"I think all that you said at the conference, upon the subject at the late debates, was right. And it amounted to no more than this: 'The general rule is, they who are in the favor of God, know they are so.

But there may be some exceptions. Some may fear and love God, and yet not be clearly conscious of his favor: at least they may not dare to affirm, that their sins are forgiven.' If you put the case thus, I think no man in his senses will be under any temptation to contradict you. For none can doubt, but whoever loves God, is in the favor of God. But is not this a little mis-stating the case? I do not conceive the question turned here. But you said, or was imagined to say, 'All penitents are in God's favor;' or 'All who mourn after God, are in the favor of God.' And this was what many disliked: because they thought it was unscriptural, and unsafe, as well as contrary to what *we* have always taught. That this is contrary to what we always taught is certain, as all our hymns as well as other writings testify: so that (whether it be true or not) it is without all question, a new doctrine among the Methodists. We have always taught, that a penitent mourned or was pained on this very account, because he felt, he was 'not in the favor of God,' but had the wrath of God abiding on him. Hence we supposed the language of his heart to be, 'Lost and undone for aid I cry!' And we believed he really was 'lost and undone,' till God did

'Peace, joy, and righteousness impart
And speak himself into his heart.'

"And I still apprehend this to be scriptural doctrine; confirmed not by a few detached texts, but by the whole tenure of Scripture; and more particularly of the Epistle to the Romans. But if so, the contrary to it must be unsafe, for that general reason, because it is unscriptural. To which one may add the particular reason, that it naturally tends to lull mourners to sleep: to make them say, 'Peace, peace to their souls, when there is no peace.' It directly tends to damp and stifle their conviction, and to encourage them in sitting down contented, before Christ is revealed in them, and before his spirit witnesses with their spirit that they are children of God. But it may be asked, 'Will not this discourage mourners?' Yes, it will discourage them from stopping where they are, it will discourage them from resting before they have the witness in themselves, before Christ is revealed in them. But it will encourage them, to seek him in the gospel way: to ask till they receive pardon and peace. And we are to encourage them, not by telling them, they are in the favor of God, though they do not know it; (such a word as this we should never utter in a congregation, at the peril of our souls;) but by assuring them 'every one that seeketh, findeth; every one that asketh receiveth.'

"I am afraid you have not been sufficiently wary in this; but have given occasion to them that sought occasion. But this is not all. I doubt you did not see God's hand in Shimei's tongue. Unto you it was given to suffer a little, of what you extremely wanted, obloquy, and evil report. But you did not acknowledge either the gift or

the giver: you saw only T. O. not God. O Jemmy, you do not know yourself. You cannot bear to be continually steeped in poison: in the esteem and praise of men. Therefore, I tremble at your stay in Dublin. It is the most dangerous place for you under heaven. All I can say is, God can preserve you in the fiery furnace, and I hope will."

On Friday, August 4, 1769, Mr. Wesley read the following paper in the Conference, containing the outlines of a plan for the future union of the Methodist preachers.

"It has long been my desire, that all those ministers of the church who believe and preach salvation by faith, might cordially agree between themselves, and not hinder, but help one another. After occasionally pressing this in private conversation, wherever I had opportunity, I wrote down my thoughts on this head, and sent them to each in a letter. Only three vouchsafed to give me an answer. So I give this up. I can do no more. They are a rope of sand; and such they will continue.

"But it is otherwise with the travelling preachers in our connexion. You are at present one body: you act in concert with each other, and by united counsels. And now is the time to consider what can be done, in order to continue this union? Indeed, as long as I live, there will be no great difficulty: I am, under God, a centre of union to all our travelling, as well as local preachers.

"They all know me, and my communication. They all love me for my work's sake: and therefore, were it only out of regard to me, they will continue connected with each other. But by what means may this connexion be preserved, when God removes me from you?

"I take it for granted, it cannot be preserved by any means, between those who have not a single eye. Those who aim at any thing but the glory of God, and the salvation of souls; who desire, or seek any earthly thing, whether honor, profit, or ease; will not, cannot continue in the connexion; it will not answer their design.* Some of them, perhaps a fourth of the whole number, will procure preferment in the church; others will turn Independents, and get separate congregations. Lay your accounts with this, and be not surprised, if some you do not suspect, be of this number.

"But what method can be taken to preserve a firm union between those who choose to remain together?†

* Mr. Wesley, through the whole of this extract, speaks of the preachers continuing in connexion with each other, on the original plan of Methodism. But if *some* among the preachers, should begin to ordain one another, to alter the relative situation of the societies to the established church, and all denominations of Dissenters, and form themselves into an independent body; and if the other preachers connive at this, and do not separate from them, in order to continue the original plan; then it may answer the designs of the ambitious, to preserve the connexion among the preachers, though they seek earthly things, and their eye be not single as at the beginning.

† That is, upon the original plan of Methodism.

"Perhaps you might take some such steps as these.—On notice of my death, let all the preachers in England and Ireland, repair to London, within six weeks.—Let them seek God by solemn fasting and prayer.—Let them draw up articles of agreement, to be signed by those who choose to act in concert.—Let those be dismissed who do not choose it, in the most friendly manner possible.—Let them choose by votes, a committee of three, five, or seven, each of whom is to be moderator in his turn.—Let the committee do what I do now; propose preachers to be tried, admitted, or excluded: fix the place of each preacher for the ensuing year, and the time of the next Conference.

"Can any thing be done now, in order to lay a foundation for this future union? Would it not be well for any that are willing, to sign some articles of agreement, before God calls me hence? Suppose something like these:

"We, whose names are underwritten, being thoroughly convinced of the necessity of a close union between those whom God is pleased to use as instruments in this glorious work, in order to preserve this union between ourselves, are resolved, God being our helper, I. To devote ourselves entirely to God; denying ourselves, taking up our cross daily, steadily aiming at one thing, to save our own souls, and them that hear us. II. To preach the old Methodist doctrines, and no other; contained in the minutes of the Conferences. III. To observe and enforce, the whole Methodist discipline, laid down in the said Minutes."—These articles, I believe, were then signed by many of the preachers. But some years afterwards, the mystery of innovations began to work secretly in the minds of several of the preachers, who hoped to exalt themselves above all that had been known before among them. They knew Mr. Wesley did, and would let, or hinder, till he was taken out of the way: they had influence enough, however, to prevail upon him to relinquish the present plan, and leave the mode of union among the preachers after his death, to their own deliberations.

Two preachers had gone over to America some time before; though, I apprehend, not by Mr. Wesley's authority. At the Conference, however, this year he sent two, Mr. Boardman, and Pillmoor, to preach and take charge of the societies in America, where Methodism began soon to flourish.

Mr. Wesley saw the work in which he was engaged, spread on every side. In 1770, he was able to reckon forty-nine circuits in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales: and one hundred and twenty-two itinerant preachers under his direction; besides about double the number of local preachers, who did not quit their usual occupations.

This year, the larger Minutes of Conference, were printed. The following abstract from them, will nearly complete our view of the economy of the Methodist societies.

Q. 1. "Have our Conferences been as useful as they might have been?

A. "No: we have been continually straitened for time. Hence scarce any thing has been searched to the bottom. To remedy this, let every Conference last nine days, concluding on Wednesday in the second week.

Q. 2. "What may we reasonably believe to be God's design, in raising up the preachers called Methodists?

A. "Not to form any new sect; but to reform the nation, particularly the church: and to spread scriptural holiness over the land.

Q. 3. "Is it advisable for us to preach in as many places as we can, without forming any societies?

A. "By no means; we have made the trial in various places: and that for a considerable time. But all the seed has fallen as by the highway-side. There is scarce any fruit remaining.

Q. 4. "Where should we endeavor to preach most?

A. 1. "Where there is the greatest number of quiet and willing hearers: 2. Where there is most fruit.

Q. 5. "Is field-preaching unlawful?

A. "We conceive not. We do not know that it is contrary to any law either of God or man.

Q. 6. "Have we not used it too sparingly?

A. "It seems we have: 1. Because our call is, to save that which is lost. Now we cannot expect them to seek us. Therefore we should go and seek them. 2. Because we are particularly called, by going into the highways and hedges (which none else will do) to compel them to come in. 3. Because that reason against it is not good, 'The house will hold all that come.' The house may hold all that come to the house; but not all that would come to the field.

"The greatest hinderance to this you are to expect from rich, or cowardly, or lazy Methodists. But regard them not, neither stewards, leaders, nor people. Whenever the weather will permit, go out in God's name into the most public places, and call all to repent and believe the gospel: every Sunday, in particular; especially where there are old societies, lest they settle upon their lees.

"The stewards will frequently oppose this, lest they lose their usual collection. But this is not a sufficient reason against it. Shall we barter souls for money?

Q. 7. "Ought we not diligently to observe, in what places God is pleased at any time to pour out his Spirit more abundantly?

A. "We ought: and at that time to send more laborers than usual into that part of the harvest.

"But whence shall we have them? 1. So far as we can afford it, we will keep a reserve of preachers at Kingswood: 2. Let an exact list be kept of those who are proposed for trial, but not accepted.

Q. 8. "How often shall we permit strangers to be present at the meeting of the society?

A. "At every other meeting of the society in every place, let no

stranger be admitted. At other times they may; but the same person not above twice or thrice. In order to this, see that all in every place show their tickets before they come in. If the stewards and leaders are not exact herein, employ others that have more resolution.

Q. 9. "Can any thing further be done, in order to make the meetings of the classes lively and profitable?

A. 1. "Change improper leaders:

2. "Let the leaders frequently meet each other's classes.

3. "Let us observe, which leaders are the most useful, and let these meet the other classes as often as possible.

4. "See that all the leaders be not only men of sound judgment, but men truly devoted to God.

Q. 10. "How can we further assist those under our care?

A. 1. "By meeting the married men and women together, the first Sunday after the visitation; the single men and women apart, on the two following, in all the large societies: this has been much neglected.

2. "By instructing them at their own houses. What unspeakable need is there of this? The world say, 'The Methodists are no better than other people.' This is not true. But it is nearer the truth, than we are willing to believe.

"N. B. For 1. Personal religion either toward God or man, is amazingly superficial among us.

"I can but just touch on a few generals. How little faith is there among us? How little communion with God? How little living in heaven, walking in eternity, deadness to every creature? How much love of the world? Desire of pleasure, of ease, of getting money?

"How little brotherly-love? What continual judging one another? What gossipping, evil-speaking, tale-bearing? What want of moral honesty? To instance only in one or two particulars.

"Who does as he would be done by, in buying and selling? Particularly in selling horses? Write him knave that does not. And the Methodist knave is the worst of all knaves.

"2. Family religion is shamefully wanting, and almost in every branch.

"And the Methodists in general will be little the better, till we take quite another course with them. For what avails public preaching alone, though we could preach like angels?

"We must, yea every travelling preacher, must instruct them from house to house. Till this is done, and that in good earnest, the Methodists will be little better than other people.

"Let every preacher, having a catalogue of those in each society, go to each house. Deal gently with them, that the report of it may move others to desire your coming. Give the children, 'the instructions for children,' and encourage them to get them by heart. Indeed you will find it no easy matter to teach the ignorant the principles of

religion. So true is the remark of Archbishop Usher. 'Great scholars may think this work beneath them. But they should consider, the laying the foundation skilfully, as it is of the greatest importance, so it is the master-piece of the wisest builder. And let the wisest of us all try, whenever we please, we shall find, that to lay this ground work rightly, to make the ignorant understand the grounds of religion, will put us to the trial of all our skill.'

"Perhaps in doing this it may be well, after a few loving words spoken to all in the house, to take each person singly into another room, where you may deal closely with him, about his sin, and misery, and duty.—Set these home, or you lose all your labor: do this in earnest, and you will soon find what a work you take in hand, in undertaking to be a travelling preacher.

Q. 11. "How shall we prevent improper persons from insinuating themselves into the society?

A. 1. "Give tickets to none till they are recommended by a leader, with whom they have met at least two months on trial. 2. Give notes to none but those who are recommended by one you know, or till they have met three or four times in a class. 3. Give them the rules the first time they meet. See that this be never neglected.

Q. 12. "Should we insist on the band-rules? Particularly with regard to dress?

A. "By all means. This is no time to give any encouragement to superfluity of apparel. Therefore give no band-tickets to any, till they have left off superfluous ornaments. In order to this, 1. Let every assistant read the thoughts upon dress, at least once a year, in every large society. 2. In visiting the classes, be very mild, but very strict. 3. Allow no exempt case, not even of a married woman. Better one suffer than many. 4. Give no tickets to any that wear calashes, high-heads, or enormous bonnets.

"To encourage meeting in band, 1. In every large society, have a love-feast quarterly for the bands only. 2. Never fail to meet them once a week. 3. Exhort every believer to embrace the advantage. 4. Give a band-ticket to none till they have met a quarter on trial.

"Observe! You give none a band ticket, *before* he meets, but *after* he has met.

Q. 13. "Do not Sabbath-breaking, dram-drinking, evil-speaking, unprofitable conversation, lightness, expensiveness or gaiety of apparel, and contracting debts without due care to discharge them, still prevail in several places? How may these evils be remedied?

A. 1. "Let us preach expressly on each of these heads. 2. Read in every society the sermon on evil-speaking. 3. Let the leaders closely examine and exhort every person to put away the accursed thing. 4. Let the preacher warn every society, that none who is guilty herein can remain with us. 5. Extirpate smuggling, buying, or selling uncustomed goods, out of every society. Let none remain

with us, who will not totally abstain from every kind and degree of it. Speak tenderly, but earnestly and frequently of it, in every society near the coasts. And read to them, and diligently disperse among them, 'The Word to a Smuggler.' 6. Extirpate bribery, receiving any thing, directly or indirecctly, for voting in any election. Show no respect of persons herein, but expel all that touch the accursed thing. Largely show, both in public and private, the wickedness of thus selling our country. And every where read 'The Word to a Freeholder,' and disperse it with both hands.

Q. 14. "What shall we do to prevent scandal, when any of our members become bankrupt?

A. "Let the assistant talk with him at large. And if he has not kept fair accounts, or has been concerned in that base practice, of raising money by coining notes (commonly called the bill-trade) let him be expelled immediately.

Q. 15. "What is the office of a Christian minister?

A. "To watch over souls, as he that must give account.

Q. 16. "In what view may we and our helpers be considered?

A. "Perhaps as extraordinary messengers (i. e. out of the ordinary way) designed, 1. To provoke the regular ministers to jealousy. To supply their lack of service, toward those who are perishing for want of knowledge. But how hard is it to abide here? Who does not wish to be a little higher? Suppose, to be *ordained!*

Q. 17. "What is the office of an *helper?*

A. "In the absence of a minister, to feed and guide the flock: in particular,

1. "To preach morning and evening. (But he is never to begin later in the evening than seven o'clock, unless in particular cases.)

2. "To meet the society and the bands weekly.

3. "To meet the leaders weekly.

"Let every preacher be particularly exact in this, and in the morning-preaching. If he has twenty hearers let him preach. If not, let him sing and pray.

"N. B. We are fully determined, never to drop the morning-preaching: and to continue preaching at five, wherever it is practicable, particularly, in London and Bristol.

Q. 18. "What are the rules of an helper?

A. 1. "Be diligent. Never be unemployed a moment. Never be triflingly employed. Never while away time: neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary.

2. "Be serious. Let your motto be, holiness to the Lord. Avoid all lightness, jesting, and foolish talking.

3. "Converse sparingly and cautiously with women: particularly with young women.

4. "Take no step toward marriage, without first consulting with your brethren.

5. "Believe evil of no one: unless you see it done, take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction on every thing. You know the judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner's side.

6. "Speak evil of no one: else your word especially, would eat as doth a canker: keep your thoughts within your own breast, till you come to the person concerned.

7. "Tell every one what you think wrong in him, and that plainly as soon as may be: else it will fester in your heart. Make all haste to cast the fire out of your bosom.

8. "Do not affect the gentleman. You have no more to do with this character, than with that of a dancing-master. A preacher of the gospel is the servant of all.

9. "Be ashamed of nothing but sin: not of fetching wood (if time permit) or drawing water: not of cleaning your own shoes, or your neighbor's.

10. "Be punctual. Do every thing exactly at the time. And in general do not *mend* our rules, but *keep* them: not for wrath, but for conscience-sake.

11. "You have nothing to do, but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always, not only to those that want you, but to those that want you most.

"Observe. It is not your business, to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that society: but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness, without which they cannot see the Lord. And remember! A Methodist preacher is to mind every point, great and small, in the Methodist discipline! Therefore you will need all the sense you have: and to have all your wits about you!

12. "Act in all things, not according to your own will, but as a son in the gospel. As such it is your part to employ your time, in the manner which we direct: partly in preaching and visiting from house to house: partly in reading, meditation, and prayer. Above all, if you labor with us in our Lord's vineyard, it is needful that you should do that part of the work which we advise, at those times and places which we judge most for his glory.

Q. 19. "What power is this, which you exercise over both the preachers and societies?

A. 1. "In November, 1738, two or three persons who desired to flee from the wrath to come, and then a few more came to me in London, and desired me to advise, and pray with them. I said, 'If you will meet me on Thursday night, I will help you as well as I can.' More and more then desired to meet with them, till they were increased to many hundreds. The case was afterwards the same at Bristol, Kingswood, Newcastle, and many other parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland. It may be observed, the desire was on their

part, not mine. My desire was, to live and die in retirement. But I did not see, that I could refuse them my help, and be guiltless before God.

"Here commenced my power; namely, a power to appoint when, and where, and how they should meet; and to remove those whose lives showed that they had not a desire to flee from the wrath to come. And this power remained the same, whether the people meeting together were twelve, or twelve hundred, or twelve thousand.

2. "In a few days some of them said, 'Sir, we will not sit under you for nothing: we will subscribe quarterly.' I said, 'I will have nothing; for I want nothing. My fellowship supplies me with all I want.' One replied, 'Nay, but you want an hundred and fifteen pounds to pay for the lease of the Foundery: and likewise a large sum of money, to put it into repair.' On this consideration I suffered them to subscribe. And when the society met, I asked, 'Who will take the trouble of receiving this money, and paying it, where it is needful?' One said, 'I will do it, and keep the account for you.' So here was the first *steward.* Afterwards I desired one or two more to help me as stewards, and in process of time, a greater number.

"Let it be remarked, it was I myself, not the people, who chose these stewards, and appointed to each the distinct work, wherein he was to help me, as long as I desired. And herein I began to exercise another sort of power, namely, that of appointing and removing stewards.

3. "After a time a young man named Thomas Maxfield, came and desired to help me as a son in the gospel. Soon after came a second, Thomas Richards, and then a third, Thomas Westall. These severally desired to serve me as sons, and to labor when and where I should direct. Observe. These likewise desired me, not I them. But I durst not refuse their assistance. And here commenced my power, to appoint each of these, when, and where, and how to labor: that is, while he chose to continue with me. For each had a power to go away when he pleased: as I had also to go away from them, or any of them, if I saw sufficient cause. The case continued the same, when the number of preachers increased. I had just the same power still, to appoint when, and where, and how each should help me; and to tell any (if I saw cause) 'I do not desire your help any longer.' On these terms, and no other, we joined at first: on these we continue joined. But they do me no favor in being directed by me. It is true, my reward is with the Lord. But at present I have nothing from it but trouble and care; and often a burden, I scarce know how to bear.

4. "In 1744, I wrote to several clergymen, and to all who then served me as sons in the gospel; desiring them to meet me in London, and to give me their advice, concerning the best method of carrying on the work of God. And when their number increased, so

that it was not convenient to invite them all, for several years I wrote to those with whom I desired to confer, and they only met me at London, or elsewhere: till at length I gave a general permission, which I afterwards saw cause to retract.

"Observe. I myself sent for these of my own free choice. And I sent for them to *advise*, not to *govern* me. Neither did I at any time divest myself of any part of the power above described, which the providence of God had cast upon me, without any design or choice of mine.

5. "What is that *power?* It is a power of *admitting* into and *excluding* from the societies under my care: of choosing and removing *stewards:* of receiving or not receiving *helpers:* of appointing them *when*, *where*, and *how* to help me, and of desiring any of them to *confer* with me when I see good. And as it was merely in obedience to the Providence of God, and for the good of the people, that I at first accepted this power, which I never sought: so it is on the same consideration, not for profit, honor, or pleasure, that I use it at this day.

6. "But 'several gentlemen are offended at your having *so much power*.' I did not seek any part of it. But when it was come unawares, not daring to bury that talent, I used it to the best of my judgment. Yet I never was fond of it. I always did, and do now, bear it as my burden; the burden which God lays upon me, and therefore I dare not lay it down.

"But if you can tell me any one, or any five men, to whom I may transfer this burden, who *can* and *will* do just what I do now, I will heartily thank both them and you.

Q. 20. "What reasons can be assigned why so many of our preachers contract nervous disorders?

A. "The chief reason, on Dr. Cadogan's principles, is either indolence or intemperance, 1. Indolence. Several of them use too little *exercise*, far less than when they wrought at their trade. And this will naturally pave the way for many, especially nervous disorders. 2. Intemperance, (though not in the vulgar sense.) They take more *food* than they did when they labored more. And let any man of reflection judge, how long this will consist with health. Or they use more *sleep* than when they labored more. And this alone will destroy the firmness of the nerves. If then our preachers would avoid nervous disorders, let them, 1. Take as little meat, drink, and sleep, as nature will bear: and 2. Use full as much exercise daily as they did before they were preachers.

Q. 21. "What general method of employing our time would you advise us to?

A. "We advise you, 1. As often as possible to rise at four. 2. From four to five in the morning, and from five to six in the evening, to meditate, pray, and read, partly the Scripture with the notes, partly the closely-practical parts of what we have published. 3. From six

in the morning till twelve (allowing an hour for breakfast) to read in order, with much prayer, first, the Christian library, and the other books which we have published in prose and verse, and then those which we recommended in our rules of Kingswood-School.

Q. 22. "Should our helpers follow trades?

A. "The question is not, Whether they may occasionally work with their hands, as St. Paul did: but whether it be proper for them to keep shop or follow merchandize? After long consideration, it was agreed by all our brethren, that no preacher who will not relinquish his trade of buying and selling (though it were only pills, drops, or balsams) shall be considered as a travelling preacher any longer.

Q. 23. "Why is it that the people under our care are no better?

A. "Other reasons may concur: but the chief is, because we are not more knowing and more holy.

Q. 24. "But why are we not more knowing?

A. "Because we are idle. We forget our very first rule, 'Be diligent. Never be unemployed a moment. Never be triflingly employed. Never while away time; neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary.'

"I fear there is altogether a fault in this matter, and that few of us are clear. Which of you spends as many hours a day in God's work, as you did formerly in man's work? We talk, talk,—or read history, or what comes next to hand. We must, absolutely must, cure this evil, or betray the cause of God.

"But how? 1. Read the most useful books, and that regularly and constantly. Steadily spend all the morning in this employ, or at least five hours in four and twenty.

"'But I read only the Bible.' Then you ought to teach others to read only the Bible, and by parity of reason, to hear only the Bible; but if so, you need preach no more. Just so said George Bell. And what is the fruit? Why, now he neither reads the Bible, nor anything else.

"This is rank enthusiasm. If you need no book but the Bible, you are got above St. Paul. He wanted others too. 'Bring the books,' says he, 'but especially the parchments,' those wrote on parchment.

"'But I have no taste for reading.' Contract a taste for it by use, or return to your trade.

"'But I have no books.' I will give each of you as fast as you will read them, books to the value of five pounds. And I desire the assistants would take care, that all the large societies provide our works, or at least the notes, for the use of the preachers.

2. "In the afternoon, follow Mr. Baxter's plan. Then you will have no time to spare: you will have work enough for all your time. Then likewise no preacher will stay with us who is as salt that has

lost its savor. For to such, this employment would be mere drudgery. And in order to it, you will have need of all the knowledge you have, or can procure.

"The sum is, go into *every house* in course, and teach *every one* therein, young and old, if they belong to us, to be Christians, inwardly and outwardly.

"Make every particular plain to their understanding; fix it in their memory; write it in their heart. In order to this, there must be 'line upon line, precept upon precept.' What patience, what love, what knowledge is requisite for this!

Q. 25. "In what particular method should we instruct them?

A. "You may as you have time, read, explain, enforce, 1. The rules of the society: 2. Instructions for children: 3. The fourth volume of sermons, and 4. Philip Henry's method of family prayer. We must needs do this, were it only to avoid idleness. Do we not loiter away many hours in every week? Each try himself: no idleness can consist with growth in grace. Nay without exactness in *redeeming time*, you cannot retain the grace you received in justification.

"But what shall we do for the *rising generation?* Unless we take care of this, the present revival will be *res unius ætatis:* it will last only the age of a man. Who will labor herein? Let him that is zealous for God and the souls of men begin *now.*

1. "Where there are ten children in a society, meet them at least an hour every week: 2. Talk with them every time you see any at home: 3. Pray in earnest for them: 4. Diligently instruct and vehemently exhort all parents at their own houses: 5. Preach expressly on education, particularly at midsummer, when you speak of Kingswood. 'But I have no gift for this.' Gift or no gift you are to do it; else you are not called to be a Methodist preacher. Do it as you can, till you can do it as you would. Pray earnestly for the gift, and use the means for it. Particularly, study the instructions and lessons for children.

Q. 26. "Why are not *we* more holy? Why do not we live in eternity? Walk with God all the day long? Why are we not all *devoted to God?* Breathing the whole spirit of *missionaries?*

A. "Chiefly because we are enthusiasts; looking for the end, without using the means.

"To touch only upon two or three instances.

"Who of you rises at four in summer? Or even at five, when he does not preach?

"Do you recommend to all our societies, the five o'clock hour for private prayer? Do you observe it? Or any other fixt time? Do not you find by experience, that *any time* is *no time?*

"Do you know the obligation and the benefit of fasting? How often do you practise it?

Q. 27. "What is the best general method of preaching?

A. "1. To invite: 2. To convince: 3. To offer Christ: 4. To build up; and to do this in some measure in every sermon.

Q. 28. "Have not some of us been led off from practical preaching by (what was called) *preaching Christ?*

A. "Indeed we have. The most effectual way of preaching Christ, is to preach him in all his offices, and to declare his *law* as well as his *gospel*, both to believers and unbelievers. Let us strongly and closely insist upon inward and outward holiness, in all its branches.

Q. 29. "How shall we guard against formality in public worship? Particularly in singing?

A. "1. By preaching frequently on the head: 2. By taking care to speak only what we feel: 3. By choosing such hymns as are proper for the congregation: 4. By not singing too much at once: seldom more than five or six verses: 5. By suiting the tune to the words: 6. By often stopping short and asking the people, 'Now! Do you know what you said last? Did you speak no more than you felt?'

"After preaching, take a little lemonade, mild ale, or candied orange-peel. All spirituous liquors, at that time especially, are deadly poison.

Q. 30. "Who is the assistant?

A. "That preacher in each circuit, who is appointed from time to time, to take charge of the societies and the other preachers therein.

Q. 31. "How should an assistant be qualified for his charge?

A. "By walking closely with God, and having his work greatly at heart: by understanding and loving discipline, ours in particular; and by loving the Church of England, and resolving not to separate from it. Let this be well observed. I fear, when the Methodists leave the church, God will leave them. But if they are thrust out of it, they will be guiltless.

Q. 32. "What is the business of an assistant?

A. "1. To see that the other preachers in his circuit behave well, and want nothing: 2. To visit the classes quarterly, regulate the bands, and deliver tickets: 3. To take in, or put out of the society or the bands: 4. To keep watch-nights and love-feasts: 5. To hold quarterly meetings, and therein diligently to inquire both into the temporal and spiritual state of each society: 6. To take care that every society be duly supplied with books: particularly with Kempis, and Instructions for Children, which ought to be in every house: O why is not this regarded? 7. To send from every quarterly meeting a circumstantial account (to London) of every remarkable conversion, and remarkable death: 8. To take exact lists of his societies every quarter, and send them up to London: 9. To meet the married men and women, and the single men and women in the large societies once a quarter: 10. To overlook the accounts of all the stewards.

Q. 33. "Has the office of an assistant been well executed?

A. "No, not by half the assistants. 1. Who has sent me word, whether the other preachers behave well or ill? 2. Who has visited all the classes, and regulated the bands quarterly? 3. Love-feasts for the bands have been neglected; neither have persons been duly taken in, and put out of the bands: 4. The societies are not half supplied with books; not even with those above mentioned. O exert yourselves in this! Be not weary! Leave no stone unturned! 5. How few accounts have I had, either of remarkable deaths, or remarkable conversions! 6. How few exact lists of the societies! 7. How few have met the married and single persons once a quarter!

Q. 34. "Are there any other advices, which you would give the assistants?

A. "Several. 1. Take a regular catalogue of your societies, as they live, in *house-row:* 2. Leave your successor a particular account of the state of the circuit: 3. See that every band leader has the rules of the bands: 4. Vigorously, but calmly enforce the rules concerning needless ornaments, drams, snuff, and tobacco. Give no band-ticket to any man or woman, who does not promise to leave them off: 5. As soon as there are four men or women believers in any place, put them into a band: 6. Suffer no love-feast to last above an hour and a half; and instantly stop all breaking the cake with another: 7. Warn all from time to time, that none are to remove from one society to another, without a certificate from the assistant in these words (else he will not be received in other societies) 'A. B. the bearer, is a member of our society in C. I believe he has sufficient cause for removing.' I beg every assistant to remember this. 8. Every where recommend decency and cleanliness. Cleanliness is next to godliness. 9. Exhort all that were brought up in the church, to continue therein. Set the example yourself: and immediately change every plan that would hinder their being at church, at least two Sundays in four. Carefully avoid whatever has a tendency to separate men from the church: and let all the servants in our preaching-houses go to church once on Sunday at least.

"Is there not a cause? Are we not unawares by little and little sliding into a separation from the church? O use every means to prevent this! 1. Exhort all our people to keep close to the church and sacrament: 2. Warn them against niceness in hearing, a prevailing evil! 3. Warn them also against despising the prayers of the church: 4. Against calling our society the church: 5. Against calling our preachers, ministers, our houses meeting-houses; call them plain preaching-houses or chapels: 6. Do not license them as Dissenters; the proper paper to be sent in at the assize's sessions, or bishop's court, is this: 'A. B. has set apart his house in C. for public worship, of which he desires a certificate.'—N. B. The justices do not license the house, but the act of parliament. 7. Do not license yourself till

you are constrained; and then not as a Dissenter, but a Methodist. It is time enough when you are prosecuted, to take the oaths. And by so doing you are licensed.

Q. 35. "But are we not Dissenters?

A. "No. Although we call sinners to repentance in all places of God's dominion; and although we frequently use extempore prayer, and unite together in a religious society: yet we are not Dissenters in the only sense which our law acknowledges, namely those who renounce the service of the church. We do not: we dare not separate from it. We are not Seceders, nor do we bear any resemblance to them. We set out upon quite opposite principles. The Seceders laid the very foundation of their work in judging and condemning others. We laid the foundation of our work, in judging and condemning ourselves. They begin every where, with showing their hearers how fallen the church and ministers are. We begin every where, with showing our hearers, how fallen they are themselves. What they do in America, or what their minutes say on this subject, is nothing to us. We will keep in the good old way.

"And never let us make light of going to church, either by word or deed. Remember Mr. Hook, a very eminent, and a zealous Papist. When I asked him, 'Sir, what do you do for public worship here, where you have no Romish service?' He answered, 'Sir, I am so fully convinced, it is the duty of every man to worship God in public, that I go to church every Sunday. If I cannot have such worship as I would, I will have such worship as I can.'

"But some may say, 'Our own service is public worship.' Yes; but not such as supersedes the church service: it presupposes public prayer, like the sermons at the university. If it were designed to be instead of the church-service, it would be essentially defective. For, it seldom has the four grand parts of public prayer, deprecation, petition, intercession, and thanksgiving.

"If the people put ours in the room of the church-service, we hurt them that stay with us, and ruin them that leave us. For then they will go no where, but lounge the Sabbath away, without any public worship at all.

Q. 36. "Nay, but is it not our duty, to separate from the church, considering the wickedness both of the clergy and the people?

A. "We conceive not, 1. Because both the priests and the people were full as wicked in the Jewish church. And yet it was not the duty of the holy Israelites to separate from them: 2. Neither did our Lord command his disciples to separate from them: he rather commanded the contrary. 3. Hence it is clear, *that* could not be the meaning of St. Paul's words, 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate.'

Q. 37. "But what reasons are there, why we should not separate from the church?

A. "Among others, those which were printed above twenty years ago, entitled 'Reasons against a separation from the Church of England!'

"We allow two exceptions. 1. If the parish minister be a notoriously wicked man: 2. If he preach Socinianism, Arianism, or any other essentially false doctrine.

Q. 38. "Do we sufficiently watch over our helpers?

A. "We might consider those that are with us as our pupils: into whose behavior and studies we should inquire every day.

"Should we not frequently ask each, 'Do you walk closely with God? Have you *now* fellowship with the Father and the Son? At what hour do you rise? Do you punctually observe the morning and evening hour of retirement? Do you spend the day in the manner which we advise? Do you converse seriously, usefully, and closely? Do you use all the means of grace yourself, and enforce the use of them, on all other persons?' &c. &c.

Q. 39. "What can be done, in order to a closer union of our helpers with each other?

A. "1. Let them be deeply convinced of the want there is of it at present, and the absolute necessity of it: 2. Let them pray for a desire of union. 3. Let them speak freely to each other: 4. When they meet, let them never part without prayer: 5. Let them beware how they despise each other's gifts: 6. Let them never speak slightingly of each other in any kind: 7. Let them defend one another's characters in every thing, so far as consists with truth; and 8. Let them labor in honor each to prefer the other before himself.

Q. 40. "How shall we try those who think they are moved by the Holy Ghost to preach?

A. "Inquire, 1. Do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire and seek nothing but God? And are they holy in all manner of conversation? 2. Have they gifts (as well as grace) for the work? Have they (in some tolerable degree) a clear, sound understanding? Have they a right judgment in the things of God? Have they a just conception of salvation by faith? And has God given them any degree of utterance? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly? 3. Have they fruit? Are any truly convinced of sin, and converted to God by their preaching?

"As long as these three marks concur in any one, we believe he is called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient proof, that he is moved thereto by the Holy Ghost.

Q. 41. "What method may we use in receiving a new helper?

A. "A proper time, for doing this, is at a conference after solemn fasting and prayer.

"Every person proposed is then to be present; and each of them may be asked,

"Have you faith in Christ? Are you going on to perfection? Do you expect to be perfected in love in this life? Are you groaning after it? Are you resolved to devote yourself wholly to God and to his work? Do you know the Methodist plan? Have you read the Plain Account? The Appeals? Do you know the rules of the society? Of the bands? Do you keep them? Do you take no snuff? tobacco? drams? Do you constantly attend the church and sacrament? Have you read the Minutes of the Conference? Are you willing to conform to them? Have you considered the rules of an helper? Especially the first, tenth, and twelfth? Will you keep them for conscience-sake? Are you determined to employ all your time in the work of God? Will you preach every morning and evening: endeavoring not to speak too long, or too loud? Will you diligently instruct the children in every place? Will you visit from house to house? Will you recommend fasting, both by precept and example?

"Are you in debt? Are you engaged to marry?

"(N. B. A preacher who marries while on trial, is thereby set aside.)

"We may then receive him as a probationer by giving him the minutes of the Conference inscribed thus:

"To *A. B.*

"You think it your duty to call sinners to repentance. Make full proof hereof, and we shall rejoice to receive you as a fellow-laborer.

"Let him then read, and carefully weigh what is contained therein, that if he has any doubt, it may be removed.

"Observe! Taking on trial is entirely different from admitting a preacher. One on trial may be either admitted or rejected, without doing him any wrong. Otherwise it would be no trial at all. Let every assistant explain this to them that are on trial.

"When he has been on trial four years, if recommended by the assistant, he may be received into full connexion, by giving him the minutes inscribed thus: 'As long as you freely consent to, and earnestly endeavor to walk by these rules, we shall rejoice to acknowledge you as a fellow-laborer.' Mean time let none exhort in any of our societies, without a note of permission from the assistant: let every exhorter take care to have this renewed yearly: and let every assistant insist upon it.

Q. 42. "What is the method wherein we usually proceed in our Conferences?

A. "We inquire,

"1. What preachers are admitted?

"Who remain on trial?

"Who are admitted on trial?

"Who desist from travelling?

"2. Are there any objections to any of the preachers? Who are named one by one.

"3. How are the preachers stationed this year?

"4. What numbers are in the society?

"5. What is the Kingswood collection?

"6. What boys are received this year?

"7. What girls are assisted?

"8. What is contributed for the contingent expenses?

"9. How was this expended?

"10. What is contributed toward the fund, for superannuated and supernumerary preachers?

"11. What demands are there upon it?

"12. How many preachers' wives are to be provided for? By what societies?

"13. Where, and when, may our next Conference begin?

Q. 43. "How can we provide for superannuated and supernumerary preachers?

A. "Those who can preach four or five times a week, are supernumerary preachers. As for those who cannot,

"1. Let every travelling preacher contribute half a guinea yearly at the Conference.

"2. Let every one when first admitted as a travelling preacher pay a guinea.

"3. Let this be lodged in the hands of the stewards.

"4. Out of this let provision be made first for the worn-out preachers, and then for the widows and children of those that are dead.

"5. Let an exact account of all receipts and disbursements be produced at the Conference.

"6. Let every assistant bring to the Conference, the contribution of every preacher in his circuit.

Q. 44. "Are not many of the preachers' wives still straitened for the necessaries of life?

A. "Some certainly have been. To prevent this for the time to come,

"1. Let every circuit either provide each with a lodging, coals, and candles, or allow her fifteen pounds a year.

"2. Let the assistant take this money at the quarterly meeting, before any thing else be paid out of it. Fail not to do this.

Q. 45. "What can be done, in order to revive the work of God where it is decayed?

A. "1. Let every preacher read carefully over the life of David Brainard. Let us be followers of him, as he was of Christ, in absolute self-devotion, in total deadness to the world, and in fervent love to God and man. Let us but secure this point, and the world and the devil must fall under our feet.

"2. Let both assistants and preachers be conscientiously exact in the whole Methodist discipline.

"3. See that no circuit be at any time without preachers. Therefore let no preacher, who does not attend the Conference, leave the circuit, at that time, on any pretence whatever. This is the most improper time in the whole year. Let every assistant see to this, and require each of these to remain in the circuit, till the new preachers come.

"Let not all the preachers in any circuit come to the Conference.

"Let those who do come, set out as late and return as soon as possible.

"4. Wherever you can, appoint prayer-meetings, and particularly on Friday.

"5. Let a fast be observed in all our societies, the last Friday in August, November, February, and May.

"6. Be more active in dispersing the books, particularly the sermon on, The good Steward, on Indwelling Sin, the Repentance of Believers, and the Scripture-Way of Salvation. Every assistant may give away small tracts. And he may beg money of the rich to buy books for the poor.

"7. Strongly and explicitly exhort all believers, to go on to perfection. That we may all speak the same thing, I ask once for all, Shall we defend this perfection, or give it up? You all agree to defend it, meaning thereby (as we did from the beginning) salvation from all sin, by the love of God and man filling our heart. The Papists say, 'This cannot be attained, till we have been refined by the fire of Purgatory.' The Calvinists say, 'Nay, it will be attained as soon as the soul and body part.' The Old Methodists say, 'It may be attained before we die: a moment after is too late.' Is it so, or not? You are all agreed, we may be saved from all sin before death. The substance then is settled. But, as to the circumstance, is the change gradual or instantaneous? It is both the one and the other. From the moment we are justified, there may be a gradual sanctification, a growing in grace, a daily advance in the knowledge and love of God. And if sin cease before death, there must, in the nature of the thing, be an instantaneous change. There must be a last moment wherein it does exist, and a first moment wherein it does not. 'But should we in preaching insist both on one, and the other?' Certainly we must insist on the gradual change; and that earnestly and continually. And are there not reasons why we should insist on the instantaneous also? If there be such a blessed change before death, should we not encourage all believers to expect it? And the rather, because constant experience shows, the more earnestly they expect this, the more swiftly and steadily does the gradual work of God go on in their soul: the more watchful they are against all sin; the more careful to grow in grace, the more zealous of good works, and the more punc-

tual in their attendance on all the ordinances of God. (Whereas just the contrary effects are observed, whenever this expectation ceases.) They are saved by hope, by this hope of a total change, with a gradually increasing salvation. Destroy this hope and that salvation stands still, or rather decreases daily. Therefore whoever would advance the gradual change in believers, should strongly insist on the instantaneous.

Q. 46. "What can be done, to increase the work of God in Scotland?

A. "1. Preach abroad as much as possible. 2. Try every town and village. 3. Visit every member in the society at home.

Q. 47. "Are our preaching-houses safe?

A. "Not at all: for some of them are not settled on trustees. Several of the trustees for others are dead.

Q. 48. "What then is to be done?

A. "1. Let those who have debts on any of the houses give a bond, to settle them as soon as they are indemnified.

"2. Let the surviving trustees choose others without delay, by indorsing their deed thus:

'We the remaining trustees of the Methodist preaching-house in ————, do according to the power vested in us by this deed, choose ————to be trustees of the said house, in the place of————

'Witness our hands————.'

"N. B. The deed must have three new stamps, and must be inrolled in Chancery within six months.

Q. 49. "May any new preaching-houses be built?

A. "Not unless, 1. They are proposed at the Conference: no nor 2. Unless two-thirds of the expense be subscribed. And if any collection be made for them, it must be made between the Conference and the beginning of February.

Q. 50. "How may we raise a general fund for carrying on the whole work of God?

A. "By a yearly subscription to be proposed by every assistant when he visits the classes at Christmas, and received at the visitation following.

Q. 51. "We said in 1744, 'We have leaned too much toward Calvinism.' Wherein?

A. "1. With regard to man's faithfulness. Our Lord himself taught us to use the expression, therefore we ought never to be ashamed of it. We ought steadily to assert upon His authority, that if a man is not faithful in the unrighteous mammon, God will not give him the true riches.

"2. With regard to working for life, which our Lord expressly commands us to do. Labor (ἐργάζεσθε) literally, work for the meat that endureth to everlasting life. And in fact, every believer, till he comes to glory, works for, as well as from life.

"3. We have received it as a maxim, That 'a man is to do nothing, in order to justification.' Nothing can be more false. Whoever desires to find favor with God should cease from evil and learn to do well. So God himself teaches by the prophet Isaiah. Whoever repents should do works meet for repentance. And if this is not in order to find favor, what does he do them for?

"Once more review the whole affair:

"1. Who of us is now accepted of God?

"He that now believes in Christ, with a loving obedient heart.

"2. But who among those that never heard of Christ?

"He that according to the light he has, feareth God and worketh righteousness.

"3. Is this the same with, he that is sincere?

"Nearly, if not quite.

"4. Is not this salvation by works?

"Not by the *merit* of works, but by works as a *condition.*

"5. What have we then been disputing about for these thirty years?

"I am afraid, *about words:* (namely, in some of the foregoing instances.)

"6. As to *merit* itself, of which we have been so dreadfully afraid: we are rewarded *according to our works*, yea *because of our works.* How does this differ from, *for the sake of our works?* And how differs this from *secundum merita operum*? Which is no more than, *as our works deserve?* Can you split this hair? I doubt, I cannot.

"7. The grand objection to one of the preceding propositions, is drawn from matter of fact. God does in fact justify those, who by their own confession neither feared God, nor wrought righteousness. Is this an exception to the general rule?

"It is a doubt, whether God makes any exception at all. But how are we sure that the person in question never did fear God and work righteousness? His own thinking so is no proof. For we know, how all that are convinced of sin, undervalue themselves in every respect.

"8. Does not talking, without the proper caution, of a *justified* or *sanctified state*, tend to mislead men? Almost naturally leading them to trust in what was done in *one moment?* Whereas we are every moment *pleasing* or *displeasing* to God, *according to our works?* According to the whole of our present inward tempers, and outward behavior."

CHAPTER IV.

STATING THE PRINCIPAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF MR. WESLEY'S LIFE AND LABORS, TILL AFTER THE CONFERENCE IN 1784; WITH A CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY OF METHODISM TO THAT PERIOD.

Some of the preachers being now in America, and several societies having been formed, they earnestly solicited Mr. Wesley, once more to cross the Atlantic and give them a visit. In the beginning of this year, he wrote to Mr. Whitefield on this subject, as follows: "Mr. Keen informed me some time since, of your safe arrival in Carolina; of which indeed I could not doubt for a moment, notwithstanding the idle report of your being cast away, which was so current in London. I trust our Lord has more work for you to do in Europe, as well as in America. And who knows, but before your return to England, I may pay another visit to the New World? I have been strongly solicited by several of our friends in New York and Philadelphia. They urge many reasons; some of which seem to be of considerable weight. And my age is no objection at all: for I bless God, my health is not barely good, but abundantly better, in several respects, than when I was five and twenty. But there are so may reasons on the other side, that as yet, I can determine nothing; so I must wait till I have further light. Here I am; let the Lord do with me as seemeth him good. For the present, I must beg of you to supply my lack of service: by encouraging the preachers as you judge best, who are as yet comparatively young and unexperienced: by giving them such advices as you think proper: and above all, by exhorting them not only to love one another, but if it be possible, as much as lieth in them, live peaceably with all men."—It is evident from what is here said, that he had a strong inclination once more to visit America. This inclination operated on his mind for many years. And when the people were sometimes tardy in complying with his directions and desires, he would often mention it, as a means of keeping them in order. Being one day asked in company, if he did intend to go to America? He answered, "If I go to America, I must do a thing which I hate as bad as I hate the devil." What is that, sir, said one present? "I must keep a secret," he replied: meaning, that if his inclination rose to a fixed purpose, he must conceal it from the societies here; otherwise, such an opposition would be raised, as might, in the event, effectually prevent him from undertaking the voyage.

Mr. Wesley, and those associated with him, were called Arminians, because they maintained that Jesus Christ died for the salvation of all men: Mr. Whitefield, and those in connexion with him, and most of the clergy in the Church of England, who preached justification by

faith alone, were denominated Calvinists, because they maintained that Christ died only for a determinate number, who must finally be saved. Such party distinctions are always mischievous in their consequences; they awaken suspicions which destroy the charity that hopeth all things, and they weaken brotherly love and christian fellowship. Each party draws consequences from the opinions of the other, which the other denies, and in reality does not hold. Hence jealousy is constantly kept awake in each party, disposing the mind to take advantage of every circumstance that may occur, to injure each other. This was precisely the case in the present year, between the Arminians and the Calvinists. The propositions at the conclusion of the Minutes,* were sufficient to kindle, what before was only jealousy and suspicion, into a flame of contention and strife. The Calvinists took the alarm, and the late honorable and Reverend W. Shirley, wrote a circular letter to all the serious clergy and others through the land. In June, 1771, Mr. Fletcher sent a copy of this letter to Mr. Wesley, and at the same time wrote as follows: "When I left Wales, where I had stood in the gap for peace, I thought my poor endeavors were not altogether in vain. L— H— said, she would write civilly to you, and desire you to explain yourself about your Minutes. I suppose you have not heard from her; for she wrote me word since, that she believed she must not meddle in the affair.—Upon my receiving yours from Chester, I cut off that part of it, where you expressed your belief of, what is eminently called by us, the doctrine of free grace, and sent it to the college, desiring it might be sent to Lady Huntingdon. She hath returned it, with a letter wherein she expresses the greatest disapprobation of it: the purport of it is to charge you with tergiversation, and me with being the dupe of your impositions. She hath wrote in stronger terms to her college.

"Things I hoped would have remained here; but how am I surprised, and grieved to see, zeal borrowing the horn of discord and sounding an alarm through the religious world against you! Mr. H— called upon me last night, and showed me a printed circular letter, which I suppose is, or will be, sent to the serious clergy and laity through the land. I have received none, as I have lost, I suppose, my reputation of being a real Protestant, by what I wrote on your Minutes, in Wales.

"The following is an exact copy of the printed letter.

"Sir,

"Whereas Mr. Wesley's Conference is to be held at Bristol, on Tuesday, the 6th of August next, it is proposed by Lady Huntingdon, and many other christian friends (real Protestants) to have a meeting at Bristol, at the same time, of such principal persons, both clergy and laity, who disapprove of the under-written Minutes; and as the

* After these words, "We said in 1774," &c. &c. to the end.

same are thought injurious to the very fundamental principles of Christianity, it is further proposed, that they go in a body to the said Conference, and insist upon a formal *recantation* of the said Minutes; and in case of a refusal, that they sign and publish their *protest* against them. Your presence, sir, on this occasion is particularly requested: but if it should not suit your convenience to be there, it is desired that you will transmit your sentiments on the subject, to such person as you think proper to produce them. It is submitted to you, whether it would not be right, in the opposition to be made to such a dreadful *heresy*, to recommend it to as many of your christian friends, as well of the Dissenters, as of the established church, as you can prevail on to be there; the cause being of so public a nature.

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

WALTER SHIRLEY."

Then followed a postscript, containing the objectionable propositions, &c. &c. After stating this, Mr. Fletcher proceeds, "I think it my duty, dear sir, to give you the earliest intelligence of this bold onset; and assure you, that upon the evangelical principles, mentioned in your last letter to me, I, for one, shall be glad to stand by you, and your doctrine to the last: hoping that you will gladly remove stumbling blocks out of the way of the weak, and alter such expressions as may create prejudice in the hearts of those who are inclined to admit it.—If you come this way, sir, I will show you the minutes of what I wrote in Wales, in defence of what is called your *dreadful heresy:* for as to the writing itself, I have it not, Lady H— would never return it to me. Dear sir, we can never make too much of Jesus Christ: some may preach and exalt him out of contention, but let us do it willingly and scripturally, and the Lord will stand by us. I beg, I entreat him, to stand by you; particularly at this time to give you the simplicity of the dove, and the wisdom of the serpent; the condescension of a child, and the firmness of a father.

"I write to Mr. Shirley, to expostulate with him to call in his circular letter. He is the last man who should attack you. His sermons contain propositions much more heretical and anticalvinistic, than your minutes. If my letter have not the desired effect, I shall probably, if you approve of them and will correct them, publish them for your justification. I find Mr. Ir—d, is to write, to make you *tamely recant*, without measuring swords, or breaking a pike with our real Protestants. I write to him also."

Tuesday, August 6, the Conference began at Bristol. On Thursday morning Mr. Shirley and his friends were admitted; when a conversation took place for about two hours, on the subject which occasioned their visit. Though the party had shown much violence in writing, yet the interview with the Conference was managed with

great temper and moderation; but with little or no effect. Mr. Fletcher's letters were immediately printed, and on the 14th, Mr. Wesley wrote the following letter to Lady Huntingdon:

"MY DEAR LADY,

"When I received the former letter from your ladyship, I did not know how to answer: and I judged, not only that silence would be the best answer, but also, that, with which your ladyship would be best pleased. When I received your ladyship's of the second instant, I immediately saw that it required an answer; only I waited till the hurry of the Conference was over, that I might do nothing rashly. I know your ladyship would not 'servilely deny the truth.' I think neither would I: especially that great truth JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH; which Mr. Law indeed flatly denies (and yet Mr. Law was a child of God) but for which I have given up all my worldly hopes, my friends, my reputation; yea for which I have so often hazarded my life, and by the grace of God will do again. The principles established in the minutes, I apprehend to be no way contrary to this; or to that faith, that consistent plan of doctrine, which was once delivered to the saints. I believe whoever calmly considers Mr. Fletcher's letters, will be convinced of this. I fear therefore, 'zeal against those principles,' is no less than zeal against the truth, and against the *honor* of our Lord. The preservation of *his* honor appears so sacred to *me*, and has done for above these forty years, that I have counted, and do count, all things loss in comparison of it. But till Mr. Fletcher's printed letters are answered, I must think every thing spoken against those minutes, is totally destructive of *his honor*, and a palpable affront to him; both as our prophet and priest, but more especially as the King of his people. Those letters, which therefore could not be suppressed without betraying the honor of our Lord, largely prove, that the minutes lay no other foundation, than that which is laid in Scripture, and which I have been laying, and teaching others to lay, for between thirty and forty years. Indeed it would be amazing that God should at this day prosper my labors, as much if not more than ever, by convincing as well as converting sinners, if I was 'establishing another foundation, repugnant to the whole plan of man's salvation under the covenant of grace, as well as the clear meaning of our *established* church and all other Protestant churches.' This is a charge indeed! But I plead not guilty: and till it is proved upon me, I must subscribe myself,

My dear Lady,

Your Ladyship's

Affectionate but much injured servant,

JOHN WESLEY."

The controversy was now continued for some time, but very prudently committed, almost wholly, to Mr. Fletcher; who managed it

with astonishing temper and success. Indeed, the temper of this gentleman, did not lead him to polemic divinity. He was devout and pious, to a degree seldom equalled since the days of the apostles. But being urged into this controversy by the love of truth and reverence for Mr. Wesley, he displayed great knowledge of his subject, and a most happy manner of treating it. His letters were published under the title of, "Checks to Antinomianism." They exhibit a fine model for controversy on religious subjects, and will ever bear ample testimony to the goodness of Mr. Fletcher's head and heart.

It appears to me, however, that the propositions as they stand in the minutes, in short sentences without explanation, have a very suspicious appearance. The expressions are too ambiguous, and might easily have been exchanged for others more clear, and less liable to give offence. I cannot therefore commend, either the wisdom or prudence that dictated them; notwithstanding the abilities of a Fletcher could make them speak, clearly and explicitly, the language of *free grace.*

Mr. Fletcher died in 1785, greatly lamented by thousands who had been benefited by his animating and instructive ministry, and by his pious conversation. The Rev. Mr. Gilpin has given us the finest and most interesting traits of this excellent man's character.

In February, 1772, Mr. Wesley says, "I casually took a volume of what is called, 'A *Sentimental* Journey through France and Italy.' *Sentimental!* What is that? It is not English. He might as well say *continental.* It is not sense: it conveys no determinate idea. Yet one fool makes many; and this nonsensical word (who would believe it?) is become a fashionable one! However, the book agrees full well with the title: for the one is as queer as the other. For oddity, uncouthness, and unlikeness to all the world beside, I suppose the writer is without a rival!"

The preachers met with no riotous mobs to oppose their progress in Scotland. Here, all ranks and orders of the people, from the highest to the lowest, had long been remarkable for a decent regard to religion and the ministerial character: and this religious *decorum*, had not yet been destroyed by that degree of profaneness which stimulates the mind to treat the ministers of the gospel with contempt and outrage. But the preachers soon found, that they had prejudices to contend with more difficult to be overcome than the violence of a mob. They found the Scots strongly intrenched within the lines of religious opinions and modes of worship, which almost bade defiance to any mode of attack. Their success was therefore trifling, compared with what they had experienced in England and Ireland, where their lives had often been in danger from the mob. Mr. Wesley, however, in his stated journeys through Scotland, every where met with the most flattering marks of respect; both from the nobility (who often invited him to take their houses in his way) from many

of the established ministers, and from the magistrates of the cities. In April this year, being on his *biennial* visit to Scotland, he came to Perth, where the magistrates as a token of their respectful regard for him, presented him with the freedom of the city. The diploma ran thus:

"PERTHI vigesimo octavo die mensis Aprilis, Anno Domini millesimo septingentesimo septuagesimo secundo.

"Quo die, Magistratuum Illustris ordo, et Honorandus Senatorum cætus inclytæ civitatis Perthensis, in debiti amoris et affectus Tesseram erga Johannem Wesley Artium Magistrum, nuper Collegiæ Lincolniensis Oxoniæ Socium, Immunitatibus præfatæ Civitatis, Societatis etiam ac Fraternitatis Ædilitiæ privilegiis—de omnibus a cive necessario exigendis ac præstandis Donarunt," &c.

This diploma was struck off from a copper-plate upon parchment; the arms of the city and some of the words were illuminated, and flowers painted round the borders, which gave it a splendid appearance. And for purity of the Latin, it is not perhaps exceeded by any diploma, either from London or any other city in Europe.

Mr. Wesley now saw the religious societies he had been the happy instrument of forming, spread rapidly on every side; and the preachers increasing in an almost equal proportion. He became, therefore, every day more solicitous to provide for their unity and permanency after his decease, wishing to preserve at the same time, the original doctrines and *economy* of the Methodists. He knew the views, the opinions, and the jealousies of the preachers concerning each other, better than any other individual could possibly know them, as he had persons in all places who constantly informed him of every thing of importance that was said or done. From the beginning he had stood at the head of the connexion, and by the general suffrage had acted as dictator, in matters relating to the government of the societies. He had often found that all his authority was barely sufficient to preserve peace, and the mere external appearance of unanimity, and therefore concluded, that if his authority were to cease, or not to be transferred to another at his death, the preachers and people would fall into confusion. In January, 1773, being at Shoreham, where no doubt he had consulted Mr. Perronet on the subject, he wrote the following letter to Mr. Fletcher:

"DEAR SIR,

"What an amazing work has God wrought in these kingdoms, in less than forty years! And it not only continues, but increases throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland: nay, it has lately spread into New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, and Carolina. But the wise men of the world say, 'When Mr. Wesley drops, then all this is at an end!' And so it surely will, unless before God calls him hence, one is found to stand in his place. For 'Ουκ αγαθον

πολυκοιρανιη· Εἷς κοιρανος ἔςω.* I see more and more, unless there be one Προεςώς,† the work can never be carried on. The body of the preachers are not united: nor will any part of them submit to the rest: so that either there must be one to preside over all, or the work will indeed come to an end.

"But who is sufficient for these things? Qualified to preside both over the preachers and people? He must be a man of faith and love, and one that has a single eye to the advancement of the kingdom of God. He must have a clear understanding; a knowledge of men and things, particularly of the Methodist doctrine and discipline; a ready utterance; diligence and activity, with a tolerable share of health. There must be added to these, favor with the people, with the Methodists in general. For unless God turn their eyes and their hearts towards him, he will be quite incapable of the work. He must likewise have some degree of learning: because there are many adversaries learned as well as unlearned, whose mouths must be stopped. But this cannot be done, unless he be able to meet them on their own ground.

"But has God provided one so qualified? Who is he? Thou art the man! God has given you a measure of loving faith; and a single eye to his glory. He has given you some knowledge of men and things; particularly of the whole plan of Methodism. You are blessed with some health, activity, and diligence; together with a degree of learning. And to all these, he has lately added, by a way none could have foreseen, favor both with the preachers and the whole people——Come out in the name of God! Come to the help of the Lord against the mighty! Come while I am alive and capable of labor—

> '*Dum superest Lachesi quod torqueat, et pedibus me*
> *Porto meis, nullo dextram subeunte bacillo.*' ‡

Come while I am able, God assisting, to build you up in faith, to ripen your gifts, and to introduce you to the people. *Nil tanti.* What possible employment can you have, which is of so great importance?

"But you will naturally say, 'I am not equal to the task: I have neither grace nor gifts for such an employment?' You say true: it is certain you have not: and who has? But do you not know him who is able to give them? Perhaps not at once, but rather day by day: as each is, so shall your strength be—'But this implies,' you may say, 'a

* 'It is not good, that the supreme power should be lodged in many hands: let there be one chief governor.' The truth of the first part of this sentence has been remarkably verified among the Methodists, since the death of Mr. Wesley; to the no small injury of many societies.

† 'Who presides over the rest.'

‡ 'While Lachesis has some thread of life to spin, and I walk on my own feet without the help of a staff.' Juven. Sat. 3d.

thousand crosses, such as I feel I am not able to bear? You are not able to bear them now; and they are not now come. Whenever they do come, will He not send them in due number, weight and measure? And will they not all be for your profit, that you may be a partaker of his holiness.

"Without conferring, therefore, with flesh and blood, come and strengthen the hands, comfort the heart, and share the labor of, your affectionate friend and brother,

JOHN WESLEY."

This warm and sincere invitation, to a situation not only respected but even reverenced by so large a body of people, must have been highly flattering to Mr. Fletcher; especially as it came from a person he most sincerely loved; whose superior abilities, learning, and labors, he admired; and to whose success in the ministry he wished to give every assistance in his power. But he well knew the embarrassments Mr. Wesley met with in the government of the preachers, though he alone, under the providence of God, had given existence to their present character, influence, and usefulness: he was also well acquainted with the mutual jealousies the preachers had of each other, and with their jarring interests; but above all, with the general determination which prevailed among them, not to be under the control of any one man after the death of Mr. Wesley. Under these circumstances, he saw nothing before him but darkness, storms, and tempests, with the most threatening dangers, especially if he should live to be alone in the office. He therefore determined, not to launch his little bark on so tempestuous an ocean.

Mr. Fletcher certainly acted according to the rules of prudence, with respect to himself. But as he died before Mr. Wesley, the difficulties and dangers which he foresaw, were much greater in appearance, than they would have been in reality, had he accepted the invitation. I cannot, therefore, but lament that he did not accept it, as he would have done much good while he lived, and have prevented many of the evils which have since taken place. He would, at least, have prevented the influence which a person, some years afterwards, acquired through the connexion, with talents very inferior to most of the preachers; who has been the chief means of introducing innovations into the original plan of Methodism, which have already produced much mischief, and threaten much more in the issue: and whose rash and inconsistent conduct, on several occasions, has brought the whole body of preachers into disgrace, and embarrassed them with many difficulties.

Mr. Wesley was now advancing in the seventy-first year of his age, and found his health and strength almost undiminished: he therefore continued his labors and travels, with the same assiduity and punctuality as at the beginning. In June, 1774, when he entered on his seventy-second year, he speaks thus of himself, "This being my

birth-day, the first day of my seventy-second year, I was considering how is this, that I find just the same strength as I did thirty years ago? That my sight is considerably better now, and my nerves firmer, than they were then? That I have none of the infirmities of old age, and have lost several I had in my youth? The grand cause is, the good pleasure of God, who doth whatsoever pleaseth him. The chief means are, 1. My constantly rising at four, for about fifty years: 2. My generally preaching at five in the morning, one of the most healthy exercises in the world: 3. My never travelling less, by sea or land, than four thousand five hundred miles in a year."

About this time died Mr. John Downs; who had been many years a preacher among the Methodists. He was a man of sincere unaffected piety; of great affliction, and of uncommon genius. Mr. Charles Wesley gives the following account of his death. "John Downs has lived and died the death of the righteous. For several months past, he has been greatly alive to God, walked closely with him, and visibly grown in grace. Ever since the time that he resolved to preach again, he has preached as often as he really could, and with great success. On Friday morning he rose full of faith, and love, and joy. He declared it was the happiest day of his life, and that he had not been so well in body for years. He expressed his joy in showers of tears.—He was led to pray for the people, so as never before. Going out to the chapel at West-street, he said, 'I used to go to preach trembling, and with reluctance, but now I go in triumph.' His text was, 'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden,' &c. His words were unusually weighty and with power, but few. He perceived, that he could not finish his discourse, and gave out this verse of the hymn, 'Father I lift my heart to thee, No other help I know'—His voice failing he fell on his knees, as meaning to pray; but he could not be heard. The preacher ran and lifted him from his knees, for he could not raise himself. They carried him to bed, where he lay quiet and speechless till eight on Saturday morning, and then fell asleep. O for an end like his! It is the most enviable, the most desirable I ever heard of. His widow I visited yesterday afternoon. She surprised me, and all who saw her: so supported, so calm, so resigned. A faithful friend received her into her house. She had one sixpence in the world, and no more. But her Maker is her husband.—We all agreed, it is the Lord's doing, and is marvellous in our sight."*

In 1775, Mr. Wesley visited Ireland in his usual course; and in June, being then in the north on his return from Londonderry, he had the most severe illness he had ever before experienced. It was however, in part brought on, and afterwards increased, by such acts of imprudence as we should not expect to meet with in the conduct of a cautious, sensible, thinking man. I shall give the circum,

* Taken from the short-hand.

stances in his own words—"Tuesday 13 (of June,) I was not very well in the morning, but supposed it would soon go off. In the afternoon, the weather being extremely hot, I lay down on the grass in Mr. Lark's orchard at Cock-hill. This I had been accustomed to do for forty years, and never remember to have been hurt by it. Only I never before lay on my face, in which posture I fell asleep. I waked a little, and but a little out of order, and preached with ease to a multitude of people. Afterwards I was a good deal worse: however, the next day I went on a few miles to the Grange. The table was placed there in such a manner, that all the time I was preaching, a strong and sharp wind blew full on the left side of my head. And it was not without a good deal of difficulty that I made an end of my sermon. I now found a deep obstruction in my breast: my pulse was exceeding weak and low. I shivered with cold, though the air was sultry hot, only now and then burning for a few minutes. I went early to bed, drank a draught of treacle and water, and applied treacle to the soles of my feet. I lay till seven on Thursday the 15th, and felt considerably better. But I found near the same obstruction in my breast: I had a low, weak pulse: I burned and shivered by turns, and if I ventured to cough it jarred my head exceedingly. In going on to Derry Anvil, I wondered what was the matter, that I could not attend to what I was reading; no, not for three minutes together, but my thoughts were perpetually shifting. Yet all the time I was preaching in the evening (though I stood in the open air, with the wind whistling round my head) my mind was as composed as ever. Friday 16, in going to Lurgan, I wondered again that I could not fix my attention to what I read: yet while I was preaching in the evening on the Parade, I found my mind perfectly composed; although it rained a great part of the time, which did not well agree with my head. Saturday 17, I was persuaded to send for Dr. Laws, a sensible and skilful physician. He told me, 'I was in a high fever, and advised me to lie by.' I told him, that could not be done; as I had appointed to preach in several places, and must preach as long as I could speak. He then prescribed a cooling draught, with a grain or two of camphor, as my nerves were universally agitated. This I took with me to Tandragee: but when I came there, I was not able to preach: my understanding being quite confused, and my strength entirely gone. Yet I breathed freely, and had not the least thirst, nor any pain from head to foot.

"I was now at a full stand: whether to aim at Lisburn, or to push forward for Dublin? But my friends doubting whether I could bear so long a journey, I went straight to Derry Agby, a gentleman's seat on the side of a hill, three miles beyond Lisburn. Here nature sunk, and I took to my bed: but I could no more turn myself therein, than a new-born child. My memory failed as well as my strength, and well nigh my understanding. Only those words ran in my mind,

when I saw Miss Gayer on one side of the bed, looking at her mother on the other,

> 'She sat, like patience on a monument
> Smiling at grief.'

"I can give no account of what followed for two or three days, being more dead than alive. Only I remember it was difficult for me to speak, my throat being exceedingly dry. But Joseph Bradford tells me, I said on Wednesday, 'It will be determined before this time to-morrow;' that my tongue was much swollen, and as black as a coal; that I was convulsed all over, and for some time my heart did not beat perceptibly, neither was any pulse discernible.

"In the night of Thursday, the 22d, Joseph Bradford came to me with a cup, and said, 'Sir, you must take this.' I thought I will, if I can, to please him; for it will do me neither harm nor good. Immediately it set me a vomiting; my heart began to beat, and my pulse to play again. And from that hour, the extremity of the symptoms abated. The next day I sat up several hours, and walked four or five times across the room. On Saturday I sat up all day, and walked across the room many times, without any weariness. On Sunday I came down stairs, and sat several hours in the parlor. On Monday I walked before the house: on Tuesday I took an airing in the chaise: and on Wednesday, trusting in God, to the astonishment of my friends, I set out for Dublin."

About this time, Mr. Wesley published his "Calm Address to the American Colonies," then at war with England, the mother country. This tract made a great noise, and raised him many adversaries. Being frequently asked, why he published it? He answered, in Lloyd's Evening Post, "Not to get money. Had that been my motive, I should have swelled it into a shilling pamphlet, and have entered it at Stationer's Hall.—Not to get preferment for myself, or my brother's children—not to please any man living, high or low. I know mankind too well. I know they that love you for political service, love you less than their dinner; and they who hate you, hate you worse than the devil.—Least of all did I write, with a view to inflame any: just the contrary. I contributed my mite toward putting out the flame which rages all over the land," &c.—Many of his friends, however, were of opinion that he would have acted a more wise and better part, had he never meddled with political disputes. Observation had convinced them, that ministers of the gospel, by interfering with politics, have seldom done any good, and often much harm: having frequently hindered their own usefulness, and made a whip for their own backs.

In the beginning of the year 1776, Mr. Fletcher was recovering from a severe illness. Mr. Wesley, having a high opinion of the salutary effects of easy journies through the country, in such cases, invited Mr. Fletcher to come out, and accompany him through some

of the societies in the spring. Part of Mr. Fletcher's answer is as follows; "I received last night the favor of yours, from Bristol. My grand desire is, to be just what the Lord would have me to be. I could, if you wanted a travelling assistant, accompany you, as my little strength would admit, in some of your excursions. But your recommending me to the societies as one who might succeed you, should the Lord take you hence before me, is a step to which I could by no means consent. It would make me take my horse and gallop away. Beside, such a step would at this juncture, be, I think, peculiarly improper.—We ought to give as little hold to the evil surmisings, and rash judgments of our opponents as may be.—What has made me glut our friends with my books, is not any love to such publications, but a desire to make an end of the controversy. It is probable that my design has miscarried; and that I have disgusted rather than convinced the people.—I agree with you, sir, that now is the time to pray both for ourselves and our king: for the Church of England, and that part of it which is called the Methodists. I cast my mite of supplication into the general treasure. The Lord guide, support, and strengthen you more and more unto the end!"

An order had been made by the House of Lords in May this year, "That the Commissioners of His Majesty's Excise do write circular letters to all such persons whom they have reason to suspect to have plate, as also to those who have not paid regularly the duty on the same," &c. In consequence of this order, the Accomptant-General for Household Plate, sent Mr. Wesley, in September, a copy of the order, with the following letter:

"Reverend Sir,

"As the commissioners cannot doubt but you have plate for which you have hitherto neglected to make an entry, they have directed me to send you the above copy of the lords' order, and to inform you, they expect that you forthwith make due entry of all your plate, such entry to bear date from the commencement of the plate duty, or from such time as you have owned, used, had, or kept any quantity of silver-plate, chargeable by the Act of Parliament, as in default hereof, the Board will be obliged to signify your refusal to their lordships.—N. B. An immediate answer is desired."

Mr. Wesley answered as follows:

"Sir,

"I have *two* silver tea-spoons at London, and *two* at Bristol. This is all the plate which I have at present: and I shall not buy any more, while so many around me want bread.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

John Wesley."

The Methodists had now got a footing in the Isle of Man.* The

* "The Isle of Man, is situated in the Irish sea, lying about seven leagues north from Anglesey; about the same distance from Lancashire; nearly the like distance south-east from Galloway, and nine leagues east from Ireland. Its form is long and narrow, stretching from the north-east of Ayre Point to the Calf of Man, which lies south-west, at least thirty English miles. Its breadth in some places is more than nine miles, some say twelve, in most places eight, and in some not above five; and contains about one hundred and sixty square miles."

This island is mentioned by several ancient authors. Cæsar calls it Mona: but the Mona of Tacitus, can only be applied to Anglesey. Pliny calls it Monabia: and in Ptolemy we find Monaida, that is, the farther or more remote Mön. Orosius styles it Menavia; and tells us that it was extremely fertile. Bede, who distinguishes clearly two Menavian Islands, names this the Northern Menavia, bestowing the epithet of Southern upon Anglesey. Alured of Beverly, also speaks of it as one of the Menavian Islands. The Britons in their own language, called it Manaw, more properly Main au, i. e. "a little Island," which seems to be latinized in the word Menavia. All which proves, that this small isle was early inhabited, and as well known to the rest of the world as either Britain or Ireland.

The Isle of Man was, for a long time, an independent state, governed by its own princes. At length, however, they became feudatories to the kings of England, resorted to their court, were kindly received, and had pensions bestowed upon them. Upon the demise of Magnus, the last king of this isle, without heirs male, Alexander III. king of Scots, who had conquered the other isles, seized likewise upon this; which, as part of that kingdom, came into the hands of Edward I., who directed William Huntercumbe, Warden of that isle for him, to restore it to John Baliol, who had done homage to him for the kingdom of Scotland.

But it seems there was still remaining, a lady named Austrica, who claimed this sovereignty, as nearest of kin to the deceased Magnus. This claimant being able to obtain nothing from John Baliol, applied herself to King Edward, as the superior lord. He, upon this application, by his writ, which is yet extant, commanded both parties, in order to determine their right, to appear in the King's Bench. The progress of this suit does not appear; but we know that this lady, by a deed of gift conveyed her claim to Sir Simon de Montacute; and after many disputes, invasions by the Scots, and other accidents, the title was examined in Parliament, in the Seventh of Edward III. and solemnly adjudged to William de Montacute; to whom, by letters patent dated the same year, that monarch released all claim whatsoever.

In the succeeding reign, William de Montacute, earl of Salisbury, sold it to Sir William Scroop, afterward earl of Wiltshire; and upon losing his head, it was granted by Henry IV. to Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland; who being attainted, had all his lands restored, except the Isle of Man, which the same monarch granted to Sir John Stanley, to be held by him of the kings his heirs and successors, by homage, and a cast of falcons to be presented at every coronation: and from this family, afterwards earls of Derby, it descended to the duke of Athol.

This island, from its situation directly in the mouth of the Channel, is very beneficial to Britain, by lessening the force of the tides, which would otherwise break with far greater violence than they do at present. The inhabitants are at this day a brisk, lively, hardy, industrious, and well-meaning people. There are few who have over-grown fortunes, and as few who are in distress. The late Lord Derby farming out his customs to foreigners, the insolence of those farmers drew on them the resentment of the English government; and the inhabitants, by an Act of Parliament, were deprived of an open trade with this country. This naturally produced smuggling, which was carried on with astonishing success; till the government in 1765, thought proper to put an entire stop to it, by purchasing the island of the duke of Athol, except his landed property in it: and the manorial rights and emoluments, the patronage of the bishopric, and other ecclesiastical benefices, are unalienably vested in the Crown, and the island subjected to the regulations of the British excise and customs. The inhabitants of the isle are of the Church of England, and the bishop is styled, Bishop of Sodor and Man. By an Act of Parliament, the 33d of Henry VIII. this bishopric is declared to be in the province of York. See Encyclop. Brit.

last year, a local preacher from Liverpool had paid them a visit, and spent some time with them. He repeated his visit this year, and societies were already formed in seven different places, and they reckoned one hundred and fifty-seven members in the island. It happened here, as in most places of Great Britain and Ireland, that the first preaching of the Methodists, produced no commotions or riots among the common people. I am, indeed, fully convinced that the lower orders of the people, would never become riotous on any occasion, had they food sufficient to eat, were they not excited to those acts of outrage, under false pretences, by persons who have some influence over them, and who endeavor to keep behind the scene. The preachers, however, did not long enjoy peace. Two or three ill-minded persons, of some influence in the island, formed a plan of opposition, which in such cases, is but too often successful. It is perhaps universally true, that they who are destitute of the necessary qualifications to do good, have still the power of doing much harm: so much easier is it, to do the one than the other. These persons, to give greater weight to their opposition, so far prejudiced the mind of the bishop against these new comers, that he wrote a pastoral letter, directed to all the rectors, vicars, chaplains, and curates, within the Isle and diocese of Man. In this letter he states the ground of his opposition thus: "Whereas we have been informed, that several unordained, unauthorized, and unqualified persons from other countries, have for some time past, presumed to preach and teach publicly, and hold and maintain conventicles; and have caused several weak persons to combine themselves together in a new society, and have private meetings, assemblies, and congregations, contrary to the doctrines, government, rites, and ceremonies of the established church, and the civil and ecclesiastical laws of this Isle: We do therefore, for the prevention of schism and the reëstablishment of that uniformity in religious worship which so long hath subsisted among us, hereby desire and require each and every of you, to be vigilant and use your utmost endeavors to dissuade your respective flocks from following, or being led and misguided by such incompetent teachers," &c., &c. After expatiating a little on this part of his charge, he tells his clergy that if they could not prevail with the people by persuasion, that they must get a knowledge of the names of such persons as attended at these *unlawful* meetings, as he calls them, and especially of such as enjoyed any office or privilege by episcopal license, and present them to his Rev. Vicars-General, or to some of them. He then requires every one of his clergy, to repel any Methodist preacher from the sacrament, if he should offer himself at the table to receive it. He further directs, that this pastoral letter should be read, *plena Ecclesia*, in full church, the next Sunday after the receipt thereof.

The storm now became violent, and Methodism was threatened with a total shipwreck on the island. The preachers and people,

however, weathered it out; and in the end of May, 1777, Mr. Wesley, who always wished to stand foremost in danger and diligence, paid them a visit, and was received in a very friendly manner by a few persons of respectability and influence. At Peele-Town, Mr. Corbet said, he would gladly have asked him to preach in his church, but the bishop had forbid it; who had also forbidden all his clergy to admit any Methodist preacher to the Lord's Supper. On this occasion Mr. Wesley observes, "Is any clergyman obliged, either in law or conscience to obey such a prohibition? By no means. The *will* even of the king does not bind any English subject, unless it be seconded by an express law. How much less the will of a bishop? But did not you take an oath to obey him?" "No: nor any clergyman in the three kingdoms. This is a mere *vulgar error*. Shame that it should prevail almost universally."

About the time of the Conference this year, a travelling preacher who had been well received by the people, and who had enjoyed a large share of Mr. Wesley's confidence for several years, withdrew from the connexion, and went among the Friends. There had been a misunderstanding between them, for some time before he took this step; and soon afterwards he wrote to Mr. Wesley on the subject. Mr. Charles, I suppose, was in the habit of corresponding with this preacher, and happening to see the letter, requested his brother to let him answer it. The request was granted; and as the answer is written with candor, contains some good observations on young converts, and points out one striking trait in Mr. John Wesley's character, I shall insert it. The date is October this year.*

"I thank you," says he, "for your affectionate letter.† It confirms and increases my love towards you. Your phrase and dress, make no difference to us—let us abide in the love of Jesus, and we must continue to love one another—out of true impartial love to you both, I long for peace between you and my brother. But alas! you do not love each other so well as I do: mutual confidence is lost, and then what union can there be? I submit to the permissive will of Providence.

"If I know my own heart, I have nothing there but tender disinterested love for him and for you: and it is, and must be, a serious grief to me that you are not cordially affected to each other. But we might part friends, who can never part.—I wished to see you; I should not have said one word against your religion; but I should have taken the liberty of giving you a friendly caution or two, lest satan get an advantage over you, or us.

"You know, when a man leaves one religious party or society, it is a theme both to him and them. Those of his old friends who

* This letter is taken from Mr. Charles Wesley's papers in short-hand, put into my hands since the first volume of this work was published.

† I suppose, one that Mr. Charles had received from him.

loved him merely as a member of their society, will cease to love him on that account: those who have little or no grace, will partly treat him as a deserter, and express their anger or ill-will by speaking against him. This stabbing a man in the back, as soon as he turns it upon us, I abhor and protest against; and discourage to the utmost of my power.—One, who forsakes his former friends, will be tempted to speak evil of them, and mention their faults, real or supposed, to justify himself for leaving them, or to recommend himself to his new friends. I always stood in doubt of such converts; whether from the Calvinists, Moravians, Dissenters, or any other. Beside, a young convert is always most zealous in making proselytes; which awakens suspicion in the deserted party, and arms them against depredations.

"My brother showed me your last: I desired him to let me answer it. Hope of a free conversation with you, hindered me from writing. You know, I have talked with you concerning him, without reserve: I could not have used such confidence towards another. Still I am as incapable of mistrusting you, as you are of trusting him. In many things I have more fellowship with you, than I have with him: my love for both is the same.

"But, 'You expect he will keep his own secrets!' Let me whisper it into your ear; He never could do it since he was born. It is a gift which God has not given him. But I shall speak to him, and put a stop to what you justly complain of, and let all be buried in oblivion. I wish you may never have any uneasy thought on our account. Speak not therefore of my brother; think no evil of him; forget him if you can entirely, till you meet above.

"You are now entering on a new scene of things. You have no doubt of God's calling you among the Friends. I judge nothing before the time: time will show. I heartily pray God you may do, and receive much more good among them, than you did among us. If God give you discernment and favor, and you are the approved instrument of reviving his work, and their first love, I shall rejoice and be thankful that you ever left us. But if, which God forbid, you should bury your talent, do no good, and only change one form for another; alas! alas! my brother, you will prove yourself mistaken, and lose many jewels which might have been added to your crown.

"I should think worse of our society than you do, if they felt no sorrow at parting with you. Some whom I know, will seldom think of you without a sorrowful tear. The days of my mourning are just ended. My hope of you is steady, that if you hold out a little longer, I shall find you again among the blessed in that day."

This letter, and the account he has given of Mr. John Downs, are very clear proofs that Mr. Charles Wesley was not an enemy to all lay-preachers; of which indeed, many other proofs might be given.—The fact however, here stated, that Mr. John Wesley never could keep a secret, I believe is strictly true. Though his connexions and

correspondence were uncommonly large, yet no person, perhaps, in the world, had so few secrets as Mr. J. Wesley. He never travelled alone, and the person who attended him, had the charge of his letters and papers, which of course lay open to his inspection. The preachers likewise, who were occasionally with him, had access to his letters and papers, especially if he had confidence in their sincerity and zeal in religion, which it was not very difficult to obtain. It was easy for these persons to see the motive that influenced him, and the end he had in view in every action of his life, however remote from public observation: and he took no pains to conceal them, but seemed rather to court the discovery.

Hitherto the society in London had occupied the old Foundery near Upper-Moorfields, as a place of worship; but were now making preparations to quit it. They had obtained the promise of a lease from the city, of a piece of ground in the City-Road, and everything being prepared, the day was fixed for laying the foundation of a chapel. "The rain," says Mr. Wesley, "befriended us much, by keeping away thousands who purposed to be there. But there were still such multitudes, that it was with great difficulty I got through them to lay the first stone. Upon this was a plate of brass, covered with another stone, on which was engraved, 'This was laid by John Wesley, on April 1, 1777.' Probably this will be seen no more, by any human eye; but will remain there, till the earth and the works thereof are burnt up."

By the end of October, 1778, the chapel was built, and ready to be opened. "November 1," says Mr. Wesley, "was the day appointed for opening the New Chapel in the City-Road. It is perfectly neat, but not fine; and contains far more than the Foundery: I believe, together with the morning chapel, as many as the Tabernacle. Many were afraid, that the multitudes crowding from all parts, would have occasioned much disturbance. But they were happily disappointed; there was none at all: all was quietness, decency, and order. I preached on part of Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple; and both in the morning and afternoon, God was eminently present in the midst of the congregation."

Upon the opening of the New Chapel, it seems Mr. John and Charles Wesley agreed, that one of them should fill the pulpit as often as possible, till the congregation became fixed and settled. This gave offence to the lay-preachers, who thought themselves slighted, and perhaps justly. They therefore obtained a promise from Mr. John Wesley, that during his absence, one of their body should preach in it when his brother could not; which subjected the other clergymen to their authority. Mr. Charles, who always wished the clergymen to enjoy a pre-eminence over the lay-preachers, was hurt at his brother's concession; and on Good-Friday, 1779, wrote to him as follows. "I have served the chapel morning and evening, and met the

society every other week since you left us. I think myself bound so to do, as long as I can; both by my duty as a clergyman, and by our agreement when the chapel was first opened. We agreed to fill the pulpit there as often as we could, especially at the beginning, till the congregation was settled. Many of the subscribers you know, were not of our society, yet of the church: out of good-will to them and to the church, not out of ill-will to the preachers, I wished the church service continued there.

"I am sorry you yielded to the preachers. They do not love the Church of England. What must be the consequence when we are gone? A separation is inevitable. Do you not wish to keep as many good people in the church as you can? By what means? What can be done now? Something might be done to save the remainder, if you had resolution, and would stand by me as firmly as I will by you. Consider what you are bound to as a clergyman; and what you do, do quickly.—You did not expect complaints of me for preaching too often! I cannot long stand in the way of any."*

It is easy to perceive, that Mr. Charles Wesley's mind was constantly awake to everything that tended, in any degree, to introduce innovations into the original plan of Methodism; to every measure which had any tendency to alter the relative situation of the societies to the established church, and to other bodies of religious professors in the nation, and to form them into a separate party. His whole soul revolted from this, and he used all his influence to prevent it.

In February this year, Mr. John Wesley observes, "Finding many serious persons were much discouraged by prophets of evil, confidently foretelling very heavy calamities, which were coming upon our nation; I endeavored to lift up their hands, by opening and applying those comfortable words, Psalm xlii. 5, 6. 'Why art thou so heavy, O my soul? Why art thou so disquieted within me? O put thy trust in God; for I will yet give him thanks, who is the help of my countenance and my God.'"—The next day was the National Fast. And he observes, "So solemn a one I never saw before. From one end of the city to the other, there was scarce any one seen in the streets. All places of public worship were crowded in an uncommon degree; and an unusual awe sat on most faces. I preached on the words of God to Abraham, interceding for Sodom, 'I will not destroy it (the city) for ten's sake.'"

When we find a man constantly travelling through all parts of the nation; holding intercourse with immense multitudes of people, by means of the pulpit and private correspondence; and exerting all his influence on every occasion of public distress or alarm, to soften and quiet the minds of the people, we must call him a national blessing. And such was the constant practice of Mr. Wesley for more than half

* Taken from the short-hand.

a century! Let us hope, that the men who have succeeded him, will follow his example.

In November, Mr. Wesley observes, "My brother and I set out for Bath, on a very extraordinary occasion. Some time since, Mr. Smyth, a clergyman whose labors God had greatly blessed in the North of Ireland, brought his wife over to Bath, who had been for some time in a declining state of health. I desired him to preach every Sunday evening in our chapel, while he remained there. But as soon as I was gone, Mr. M—, one of our preachers, vehemently opposed that; affirming it was the common cause of all the lay-preachers: that they were appointed by the Conference, not by me, and he would not suffer the clergy to ride over their heads; Mr. Smyth in particular, of whom he said all manner of evil. Hence the society was torn in pieces, and thrown into the utmost confusion."—I am sorry to confess on this occasion, that there are men among the preachers, of a most violent ungovernable spirit. These, if they find it necessary for any particular purpose, to oppose an individual, or any number of individuals, of character and influence in the society, use every method in their power, both in the pulpit and out, to make him appear to the people as bad as the devil. Invention is on the rack to put the worst construction possible on everything he may say or do. Nay they attribute many things to him, the very thought of which never entered his heart, till he found himself accused of them. This line of conduct seems to have been taken from the practice of the Romish priests, who represent those whom they choose to call heretics, as guilty of every species of crime imagination can invent: and the Jesuits generally accused their most powerful opponents of heresy.—The Romish clergy call their heretics, enemies of the church: these preachers, call those who stand in the way of their own schemes of ambition and power, enemies of the work of God, "incarnate devils," &c. and from an affectation of charity pray for them in a way that only tends to inflame the minds of the people against them, by making them appear more guilty; and to give a greater display of their own goodness, by pretending a concern for them, and for the interests of the people. Thus we see, these men imitate their great exemplars in these kinds of contests, with wonderful exactness. Their language indeed differs, but the governing spirit in both is the same; and in the same circumstances would produce the same effects! It is natural for the unsuspecting people at first, to believe that none of the preachers would bring accusations against an individual (or any number of individuals associated together) merely for the purpose of ruining his reputation with the society, that their own schemes may the better succeed: and yet this was undoubtedly the fact in the case before us; and I wish it were the only fact of the kind that might be recorded. It is easy for these men to bear down any individual for a long time, as he has generally no immediate access to the people, to prove his own innocence; and they have the pulpit, which they make use of to

keep up an influence against him. In this case innocence is no protection against universal prejudice and reproach; and the best friends to the connexion, may be sacrificed to the secret machinations of a combination of a few preachers. And what is still worse, they have no redress, since the death of Mr. Wesley, but through the medium of their enemies; and every one will easily conjecture how this must terminate. The reader will observe, that I speak only of a few of the preachers whose conduct is so very reprehensible; yet I cannot help blaming the rest for continuing these violent men in the connexion, and more especially for continuing them in any office of government in the societies, as it brings the whole body of the preachers, however innocent, under a suspicion of favoring such unchristian proceedings; which, if not vigorously opposed, must ruin the whole system, and bring religion itself into disgrace. He, therefore, acts the part of a true friend to Methodism, who resists practices so destructive in their tendency, and who endeavors by every lawful method in his power, to prevent a repetition of them: who shows in a strong light, that men capable of adopting such iniquitous means of carrying their schemes into effect, are not fit to be Methodist preachers; and that, it becomes the indispensable duty of the rest to cut off a hand, a foot, and even to pluck out a right eye, and to cast them away, rather than the whole body should perish.—I shall only observe further on this disagreeable subject, that the intelligent reader, who is acquainted with the internal affairs of the Methodists, will easily recollect instances, wherein the truth of what is here stated has been fully proved, and amply illustrated.

It seems Mr. M—— considered himself as asserting the rights of Conference, and acting for the benefit of the whole body of the preachers, who ought therefore to make it a common cause. Mr. Charles Wesley was firmly persuaded, that a combination of preachers against his brother's authority, did actually exist; and that Mr. M—— on this occasion, was no more than their agent, through whom they meant to try their strength. How this might be, is uncertain; but Mr. Wesley, at first, resisted this encroachment on his power with great firmness. "I read to the society," says he, "a paper which I wrote near twenty years ago, on a like occasion. Herein I observed, that the rules of our preachers were fixed by me, before any conference existed, particularly the twelfth: 'Above all, you are to preach *when* and *where* I appoint.' By obstinately opposing this rule, Mr. M—— has made all this uproar. In the morning, at a meeting of the preachers, I informed Mr. M——, that as he did not agree to our fundamental rule, I could not receive him as one of our preachers, till he was of another mind. I read the same paper to the society at Bristol, as I found the flame had spread thither also. A few at Bath separated from us on this account: but the rest were thoroughly satisfied."

Mr. M——, however, did not fail to use his utmost endeavors to interest the other preachers in his cause: and Mr. Wesley perceiving

that some of the old itinerants greatly favored him, wrote the following letter to one of them, which I suppose is a copy of that which was sent to the rest. The date is January, 1780.

"My Dear Brother,

"You seem to me not to have well considered the rules of an helper, or the rise of Methodism. It pleased God by me, to awaken first my brother, and then a few others; who severally desired of me, as a favor, that I would direct them in all things. After my return from Georgia, many were both awakened and converted to God. One, and another and another of these, desired to join with me as sons in the gospel, to be directed by me. I drew up a few plain rules (observe, there was no conference in being!) and permitted them to join me on these conditions. Whoever therefore violates these conditions, particularly that of being directed by me in the work, does *ipso facto* disjoin himself from me. This brother M—— has done (but he cannot see that he has done amiss) and he would have it a common cause; that is, he would have all the preachers do the same. He thinks 'they have a right so to do.' So they have. They have a right to disjoin themselves from me, whenever they please. But they cannot, in the nature of the thing join with me, any longer than they are directed by me. And what if the present preachers disjoined themselves? What should I lose thereby? Only a great deal of labor and care, which I do not seek, but endure; because no one else either can or will.

"You seem likewise to have quite a wrong idea of a conference. For above six years after my return to England, there was no such thing. I then desired some of our preachers to meet me; in order to advise, not to control me. And you may observe, they had no power at all, but what I exercised through them. I chose to exercise the power which God had given me, in this manner, both to avoid ostentation, and gently to habituate the people to obey them, when I should be taken from their head. But as long as I remain with them, the fundamental plan of Methodism remains inviolate: as long as any preacher joins with me, he is to be directed by me in his work. Do not you see then, that brother M——, whatever his intentions might be, acted as wrong as wrong could be? And that the representing of this, as the common cause of the preachers, was the way to common destruction? The way to turn all their heads, and to set them in arms? It was a blow at the very root of Methodism. I could not therefore do less than I did. It was the very least that could be done, for fear that the evil should spread.

"I do not willingly speak of these things at all: but I do it now out of necessity, because I perceive the mind of you, and some others, is a little hurt by not seeing them in a true light.

I am,

Your affectionate brother,

J. Wesley."

This letter had not all the effect Mr. Wesley desired. He tells us, that he had written the paper which he read to the society at Bath and Bristol, twenty years before, on a like occasion. But he soon found, that there was a vast difference between his situation at that time, and the present. In the course of twenty years, the preachers had greatly increased in number and influence; and the vigor of his mind, to resist an opposition like this, was greatly diminished. He seemed sensible of this; for as the Conference drew near he was evidently intimidated, and wrote to his brother Charles to accompany him to Bristol, where it was to be held. Mr. Charles had carefully watched all the proceedings in this affair, and was highly displeased both at them, and at his brother's timidity. He answered as follows; "My reasons against accepting your invitation to the Conference, are, 1. I can do no good: 2. I can prevent no evil: 3. I am afraid of being a partaker of other men's sins, or of countenancing them by my presence. 4. I am afraid of myself; you know I cannot command my temper, and you have not courage to stand by me. 5. I cannot trust your resolution: unless you act with a vigor that is not in you, *conclamatum est*, our affairs are past hope.

"I am not sure they will not prevail upon you to ordain them.—You claim the power, and only say, 'It is not probable you shall ever exercise it.' Probability on one side, implies probability on the other; and I want better security. So I am to stand by, and see the ruin of our cause! You know how far you may depend on me; let me know how far I may depend on you, and on our preachers. In the Bath affair you acted with vigor for the first time; but you could not hold out. Unmindful of your power and your infirmity, you yielded to the rebel, instead of his yielding to you. You should not have employed him again, till he had owned his fault. This quite overturned my confidence in you, which I should never have told you had I not been compelled.—If you think my advice can be of any use to you, I will attend you to Bristol, and be always within call," &c.

Mr. Charles accordingly attended his brother to Bristol, and was present at the Conference: but exceedingly dissatisfied with his brother's total want of courage on the occasion. About a fortnight after, he sent him the following letter. "I did not hope by my presence at the Conference, to do any good, or prevent any evil. So I told you in London. Yet I accepted your invitation, only because you desired it. And as I came merely to please you, I resolved not to contradict your will in any thing. Your will, I perceived, was to receive Mr. M——, unhumbled, unconvinced, into your confidence, and into your bosom. He came uninvited, and openly accused your curate for obeying your orders: you suffered it; and did not give Mr. M—— the gentlest reproof for disobeying them, and drawing others into his rebellion; and endeavoring to engage all the preachers in it; making an actual separation at Bath, and still keeping up his sepa-

rate society. My judgment was, never to receive Mr. M—— as a preacher, till he acknowledged his fault. But I submitted and attended in silence. I was much easier for me to say nothing, than to speak neither more nor less than you would approve. I was sometimes strongly tempted to speak; but if I had opened my mouth I should have spoiled all.—Your design, I believed, was to keep all quiet—I allow you your merit—*Tu Maximus ille es,*

*Unus qui nobis cedendo restituis rem.**

"By a very few words I could have provoked your preachers to lay beside the mask; but that was the very thing you guarded against; and, I suppose, the reason for which you desired my presence, that I might be some sort of check to the independents. Still I think it better for the people, that they (the preachers) should show themselves before your death, than after it. You think otherwise; and I submit. *Satis, jam satis spectata in te amicitia est mea:*† and I am perfectly satisfied with my own insignificancy. I have but one thing to do; the Lord make me ready for it."

Here we see the preachers prevailed, and Mr. Wesley gave way: and from this Conference to the time of his death, I believe his authority was gradually on the decline. Mr. Wesley knew how to yield, and preserve an appearance of authority, in cases where he saw resistance would be useless, or productive of confusion. He observes in his letter to the preachers, that Mr. M——'s proposition, which tended to deprive him of a portion of his power, was, "a blow at the root of Methodism." He must mean, at the root of discipline, or the economy established by his authority among the preachers and people. This was true. The discipline, and his power, grew up together; they mutually supported each other, and the one was the natural guardian of the other. What wonder then, that, a breach being now made in his power, the discipline should soon after be overrun with innovations? When the fence is broken down, the garden is trodden under foot, and soon overspread with weeds.

In the beginning of this year, a great clamor was raised against the bill passed in favor of the Roman Catholics. A Protestant Association was formed to obtain a repeal of it, and in the end much mischief was done: not without suspicion, however, that the outrages which followed, were greatly promoted and increased by Papists, and by others in disguise. The one party wished to disgrace the

* This line is a parody on a line of old Ennius, quoted by Cicero in his Cato Major, *Unis qui nobis cunctando restituit rem.* The words allude to Q. Fabius Maximus, who, when Hannibal invaded Italy, was made Dictator, and by marches and counter-marches delaying a battle, saved Rome; and hence was called, the Cunctator, or Delayer. Mr. Charles has changed *cunctando* for *cedendo*, 'by yielding or giving up,' and put the verb in the second person singular, to apply the words in a satirical manner to his brother—"You are that Maximus, who alone restores our affairs by giving them up."

† "My friendship for you, has now been very sufficiently proved."

Association, the other, the ministry. But before these things happened, a pamphlet was written in defence of the object the Association had in view; and an answer to it soon appeared. These pamphlets were put into Mr. Wesley's hands; and having read them, he wrote a letter on the subject, dated January 21, which he sent to the printer of the Public Advertiser. In this letter, after premising that persecution had nothing to do with the matter, and that he wished no man to be persecuted for his religious principles; he lays down this general proposition, "That no Roman Catholic does or can give security to a Protestant Government, for his allegiance and peaceable behavior." He rested the proof of this proposition on the following arguments, any one of which, if good, is proof sufficent, if the others should not apply.

"1. It is a Roman Catholic maxim, established not by private men, but by a public council, that, 'No faith is to be kept with heretics.' This has been openly avowed by the Council of Constance; but it never was openly disclaimed. Whether private persons avow or disavow it, it is a fixed maxim of the Church of Rome.

"2. One branch of the *spiritual power* of the pope, is, and has been for ages, the power of granting *pardons* for all sins past, present, and to come! But those who acknowledge him to have this spiritual power, can give no security for their allegiance, &c.

"3. The power of *dispensing* with any promise, oath, or vow, is another branch of the spiritual power of the pope. And all who acknowledge his spiritual power, must acknowledge this: but whoever acknowledges this dispensing power of the pope, cannot give security for his allegiance to any government—Nay, not only the pope, but even a priest has *power to pardon sins!* This is an essential doctrine of the Church of Rome. But they who acknowledge this cannot possibly give any security for their allegiance to any government.

"Setting then religion aside, it is plain, that upon principles of reason, no government ought to tolerate men, who cannot give any security to that government for their allegiance and peaceable behavior. But this no Romanist can do, not only while he holds that 'No faith is to be kept with heretics,' but so long as he acknowledges either priestly-absolution, or the spiritual power of the pope."

The letter, from which the above is only an abstract, raised several adversaries. But Mr. O'Leary, a Capuchin friar, in Dublin, having seen the letter in the Freeman's Journal, soon became the most conspicuous of Mr. Wesley's opponents. He published Remarks upon the letter, in the same Journal; to which Mr. Wesley replied. Mr. O'Leary continued his Remarks in five succeeding Journals; and Mr. Wesley published a second reply. The Remarks were afterwards reprinted together in London, with the following title, "Mr. O'Leary's Remarks on the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Letters in defence of the Protes-

tant Associations in England, to which are prefixed Mr. Wesley's Letters."

We have here a most striking sample of Mr. O'Leary's disingenuity and artifice; if *he* gave this title to the pamphlet. For, 1. Mr. Wesley had not written one line in defence of the Protestant Associations: and, 2. Mr. Wesley's two replies published in the Freeman's Journal, were suppressed, and a spurious letter palmed on the public, as genuine, which Mr. Wesley declared he had never seen, before he saw it in Mr. O'Leary's pamphlet.

Mr. Wesley's second reply to Mr. O'Leary, contains the strength of his cause; and with what has before been said, will give the reader a full view of the subject: I shall therefore insert the substance of it.

"To the Editors of the Freeman's Journal.

"GENTLEMEN,

"Some time ago, in a letter published at London, I observed, 'Roman Catholics cannot give those whom they account heretics, any sufficient security for their peaceable behavior! 1. Because it has been publicly avowed in one of their General Councils, and never publicly disclaimed, that faith is not to be kept with heretics. 2. Because they hold the doctrine of priestly absolution: and 3. The doctrine of papal pardons and dispensations.'

"Mr. O'Leary has published Remarks on this letter: nine parts in ten of which are quite wide of the mark. Not that they are wide of *his* mark, which is to introduce a plausible *panegyric* upon the Roman Catholics, mixt with keen invectives against the Protestants; whether true or false it matters not. All this is admirably well calculated to inspire the reader with aversion to these heretics, and to bring them back to the holy, harmless, much injured Church of Rome! And I should not wonder, if these six papers should make six thousand converts to her. Close arguing he does not attempt, but he vapors, and skips to and fro, and rambles to all points of the compass in a very lively and entertaining manner.

"My argument was, the Council of Constance has openly avowed violation of faith with heretics. But it has never been openly disclaimed. Therefore those who receive this Council, cannot be trusted, by those whom they account heretics—This is my immediate conclusion. And if the premises be admitted, it will infallibly follow.

"On this Mr. O'Leary says, 'A Council so often quoted challenges peculiar attention. We shall examine it with all possible precision and impartially. At a time when the broachers of a new doctrine'—as new as the Bible—'were kindling the fire of sedition, and shaking the foundation of thrones and kingdoms'—big words, but entirely void of truth—'was held the Council of Constance. To this was cited John Huss, famous for propagating errors tending to wrest the sceptre from the hand of kings.'—Equally true—'He was obnoxious

to the Church and State.'—To the Church of Rome: not to the State in any degree.—'Huss strikes at the root of all temporal power and civil authority. He boldly asserts, that all princes, magistrates, &c. in the state of mortal sin, are deprived, *ipso facto*, of all power and jurisdiction. And by broaching these doctrines, he makes Bohemia a theatre of intestine war. See the Acts of the Council of Constance in L'Abbe's collection of Councils'—I have seen them, and can find nothing of this therein. But more of this by and by.

"'He gave notice that he would stand his trial. But he attempted to escape'—No, never, this is pure invention. 'He was arrested at Constance, and confined. His friends plead his safe-conduct. The Council then declared, *No safe-conduct granted by the Emperor, or any other Princes, to* HERETICS, *ought to hinder them from being punished as justice shall require.* And the person who has promised them security, SHALL NOT BE OBLIGED TO KEEP HIS PROMISE, BY WHATEVER TIE HE MAY BE ENGAGED.'

"And did the Council of Constance declare this? Yes, says Mr. O'Leary. I desire no more. But before I argue upon the point, permit me to give a little fuller account of the whole affair.

"The Council of Constance was called by the Emperor Sigismund and Pope John the 23d, in the year 1414. Before it began, the Emperor sent some Bohemian gentlemen, to conduct John Huss to Constance, solemnly promising, that he 'should come and *return* freely, without fraud or corruption.'

"But before he left Prague, he waited on the Bishop of Nazareth, Papal Inquisitor for that city and diocese, who, in the presence of many witnesses, gave him the following testimonial—'We, Nicholas —do by these presents, make known to all men, that we have often talked with that honorable man, Master John Huss, and in all his sayings, doings, and behavior, have proved him to be a faithful man; finding no manner of evil, sinister, or erroneous doings in him, unto the present. Prague, August 30, 1414.'

"This was attested by the hand and seal of the public notary, named Michael Pruthatietz—After this, Conrade, Archbishop of Prague, declared before all the Barons of Bohemia, that 'He knew not that John Huss was culpable or faulty, in any crime or offence whatever'—So neither the Inquisitor, nor the Archbishop, knew any thing of 'his making Bohemia a theatre of intestine war.'

"In the seventeenth session, the sentence and condemnation of John Huss, was read and published. The Emperor then commanded the Duke of Bavaria to deliver him to the executioner; for which glorious exploit, he was thus addressed by the Bishop of Landy, in the name of the Council: 'This most *holy*, and *goodly* labor, was reserved only for thee, O most noble Prince! Upon thee only doth it lie, to whom the whole rule and ministration of justice is given. Wherefore thou hast established thy praise and renown: even by the

mouths of babes and sucklings thy praise shall be celebrated for evermore!'

"From the whole of this transaction we may observe, 1. That John Huss was guilty of no crime, either in word or action; even his enemies, the Archbishop of Prague, and the Papal Inquisitor being judges. 2. That his real fault, and his only one, was opposing the Papal usurpations. 3. That this *most noble* prince, was a bigoted, cruel, perfidous murderer; and that the fathers of the Council deserve the same praise, seeing they urged him to embrue his hands in innocent blood, in violation of the public faith, and extolled him to the skies for so doing: and seeing they have laid it down as a maxim that the most solemn promise made to a heretic may be broken.

"'But,' says Mr. O'Leary, 'this regards the peculiar case of safe-conducts granted by princes to heretics'—But what then? If the public faith with heretics may be violated in one instance, it may be in a thousand—'But can the rule be extended further?'—It may; it must; we cannot tell where to stop. Away then with your witticisms on so awful a subject. What! do you sport with human blood? I take burning men alive to be a very serious thing. I pray spare your jests on the occasion.—Again, 'What more absurd than to insist on a general council's disclaiming a doctrine they never taught'—They did teach it: and that not by the bye, not incidentally; but they laid it down as a stated rule of action, dictated by the Holy Ghost—and demonstrated their sincerity therein by burning a man alive. And this Mr. O'Leary humorously compares to roasting a piece of beef! With equal tenderness, I suppose, he would compare the 'singeing the beards of heretics!' that is thrusting a burning furze-brush in their face, to the singeing a fowl before it is roasted.—Now, what security can any Romanist give a Protestant till this doctrine is publicly abjured? If Mr. O'Leary has any thing more to plead for this council, I shall follow him step by step. But let him keep his word, and 'give a serious answer to a serious charge.'—Drollery may come in, when we are talking of roasting fowls, but not when we talk of 'roasting men.'

"Would I then wish the Roman Catholics to be persecuted? I never said or hinted any such thing. I abhor the thought: it is foreign to all I have preached and written for these fifty years. But I would wish the Romanists in England (I had no others in view) to be treated still with the same lenity that they have been these sixty years: to be allowed both civil and religious liberty, but not permitted to undermine ours. I wish them to stand just as they did, before the late Act was passed: not to be persecuted, or hurt themselves; but gently restrained from hurting their neighbors.

I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

Chester, March 31, 1780. JOHN WESLEY.

Notwithstanding the high praises bestowed by some persons on Mr. O'Leary, at the time of this controversy, the impartial reader will easily observe, that Mr. Wesley had greatly the advantage in point of argument. Mr. O'Leary, to all intents and purposes, allows the charge Mr. Wesley brought against the Council of Constance; and yet afterwards affects to deny it. Mr. Berrington wrote to Mr. Wesley in defence of the same Council; and in a private letter* observes, "There never was a decision made at Constance tending to show, that, no faith is to be kept with heretics. The words of the canon are not susceptible of such a comment, unless tortured to it. At all events no council, pope, bishop, priest, or layman of our church, *ever* understood them in the sense of your interpretation—But every Catholic divine has at all times, in writing on the subject, utterly reprobated the idea of breaking faith with heretics, as contrary to every dictate of reason and religion."—These, undoubtedly, are very extraordinary assertions, but there is no proof. With regard to the Council of Constance, if the words of the canon are indeed ambiguous, which some persons do not think, yet, the burning a man alive, in open violation of the public faith, was certainly a very plain comment upon them, which can hardly leave a doubt behind. But what shall we say to the words that follow, "Every Catholic divine has at all times utterly reprobated the idea of breaking faith with heretics." I do not know that Mr. Wesley answered this letter, for there would be no end of answering groundless assertions. The modern rulers of the Church of Rome in Catholic countries, speak on this subject in a strain very different from that of Mr. Berrington. In 1768, an oath of allegiance was in contemplation for Roman Catholics of Ireland, which, for the better security of government, contained a declaration of *abhorrence* and *detestation* of the doctrines, "That faith is not to be kept with heretics, and that princes deprived by the pope, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects." The pope's legate at Brussels, Ghilini, Archbishop of Rhodes, had then the superintendence of the Romish Church in Ireland. He wrote on this subject, to the *titular* Archbishop of Dublin, and in his letter, treats the above clauses proposed in the oath, as absolutely *intolerable*. "Because," says he, "those doctrines are *defended*, and *contended* for, by most Catholic nations, and the Holy See has frequently followed them in practice." On the whole he decides, "That, as the oath is in its whole extent unlawful, so in its nature it is invalid, null, and of no effect, so that it can by no means bind and oblige consciences." This letter was published by Thomas de Burgo (Burke,) titular Bishop of Ossory, and public historiographer to the Dominican order in Ireland, in his appendix to his Hibernia Dominicana, printed in 1772; together with three similar ones to the other three titular metropolitans, and styled by the Bishop, *Literæ verè aureæ cedroque dignæ.*†

* I believe it was never published.

† See Erskine's Sketches and Hints of Church History, p. 131.

That similar decisions on the validity of oaths detrimental to the interests of the Holy See, were uniformly made by successive popes, whenever the affairs of the church required them, is well known. I intended to have brought forward a few of them, but it is unnecessary. What has been said fully proves the charge Mr. Wesley brought—"It is a maxim of the Church of Rome that faith is not to be kept with heretics." It has been taught again and again, by the first authority in this church, that the Roman Catholics are not bound to any engagements made with heretics, though confirmed by the most solemn oath that can possibly be framed, when the good of the church requires they should break it. This was not only an ancient doctrine of the church in the times of great ignorance; but we have already seen that the modern rulers of it maintain the same doctrine and contend for it. And what wonder? when we consider, 1. That the old spirit of Popery is still kept up, by the practice of the pope, to the present time: once every year, on Maundy-Thursday, he excommunicates all heretics in the most awful and terrific manner; and thus keeps up a constant spirit of hatred in the minds of Catholics against the Protestants. And, 2. That the Romish bishops take an oath at their consecration, totally inimical to every Protestant government, and which binds them to use every method in their power to subvert it; the following is a part of the oath: "The Roman Papacy, and the royalties of St. Peter, I will, saving my own order, assist them (the pope and his successors) to retain and defend against every man. The rights, honors, privileges, and authority of the holy Roman Church, and of our lord the pope, and his successors aforesaid, I will be careful to preserve, defend, enlarge, and promote. All heretics, schismatics, and rebels against our said lord, I will, to the utmost of my power, persecute (*persequar*) and oppose, and never lay down my weapons till they are utterly brought under and rooted out"—the word *persequar*, is ambiguous, but Dr. William Hales, of Trinity College, Dublin, in his Survey of the modern state of the Church of Rome, has proved, that the clause, *hereticos pro posse persequar, et expugnabo*, is an obligation to persecute heretics, and oppose them with temporal weapons; and that this appears the sense of the Church of Rome, both from her decrees and practice, and even from late instances of persecuting zeal in the Spanish and Portuguese inquisition.*

In the course of this year, some persons in America, attached to the doctrines, and to the ritual of the Church of England, wrote to Mr. Wesley, requesting that he would get a young man ordained for them, by one of the bishops in this country. They did not apply to the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge in Foreign Parts, because they did not want pecuniary assistance from that fund. Mr. Wesley wrote to Dr. Lowth, Bishop of London, begging the favor

* Erskine's Sketches, pages 133 and 228.

that he would ordain a pious young man for them. The bishop refused; and August 10, Mr. Wesley sent him the following letter.

"My Lord,

"Some time since I received your lordship's favor, for which I return your lordship my sincere thanks. Those persons did not apply to the society: because they had nothing to ask of them. They wanted no salary for their minister: they were themselves able and willing to maintain him. They therefore applied, by me, to your lordship, as members of the Church of England, and desirous so to continue, begging the favor of your lordship, after your lordship had examined him, to ordain a pious man who might officiate as their minister.

"But your lordship observes, 'There are three ministers in that country already?' True, my lord: but what are three, to watch over all the souls in that extensive country?—Will your lordship permit me to speak freely? I dare not do otherwise. I am on the verge of the grave, and know not the hour when I shall drop into it. Suppose there were threescore of those missionaries in the country, could I in conscience recommend these souls to their care? Do they take any care of their own souls? If they do (I speak it with concern) I fear they are almost the only missionaries in America that do. My lord, I do not speak rashly: I have been in America; and so have several with whom I have lately conversed. And both I and they know, what manner of men the far greater part of these are. They are men who have neither the power of religion nor the form; men that lay no claim to piety, nor even decency.

"Give me leave, my lord, to speak more freely still: perhaps it is the last time I shall trouble your lordship. I know your lordship's abilities and extensive learning: I believe, what is far more, that your lordship fears God. I have heard that your lordship is unfashionably diligent in examining the candidates for holy orders: yea, that your lordship is generally at the pains of examining them yourself. Examining them! in what respects? Why whether they understand a little Latin and Greek; and can answer a few trite questions in the science of Divinity! Alas, how little does this avail! Does your lordship examine, whether they serve Christ or Belial? Whether they love God or the world? Whether they ever had any serious thoughts about heaven or hell? Whether they have any real desire to save their own souls, or the souls of others? If not, what have they to do with holy orders? and what will become of the souls committed to their care?

"My lord, I do by no means despise learning: I know the value of it too well. But what is this, particularly in a christian minister, compared to piety? What is it in a man that has no religion? 'As a jewel in a swine's snout.'

"Some time since I recommended to your lordship a plain man,

whom I had known above twenty years; as a person of deep, genuine piety, and of unblamable conversation. But he neither understood Greek, nor Latin: and he affirmed, in so many words, that, 'He believed it was his duty to preach, whether he was ordained or no.' I believe so too. What became of him since, I know not. But I suppose he received Presbyterian ordination: and I cannot blame him if he did. He might think any ordination better than none.

"I do not know, that Mr. Hoskins had any favor to ask of the society. He asked the favor of your lordship to ordain him, that he might minister to a little flock in America. But your lordship did not see good to ordain him: but your lordship did see good to ordain and send into America, other persons, who knew something of Greek and Latin; but knew no more of saving souls, than of catching whales.

"In this respect also, I mourn for poor America: for the sheep scattered up and down therein. Part of them have no shepherds at all: particularly in the northern colonies; and the case of the rest is little better, for their own shepherds pity them not. They cannot, for they have no pity on themselves. They take no thought or care about their own souls.

"Wishing your lordship every blessing from the Great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls,

I remain, my lord,
Your lorship's dutiful son and servant,
JOHN WESLEY."

In the midst of the multiplicity of affairs in which Mr. Wesley was concerned, he constantly paid attention to the spiritual welfare, not only of the members of his own society, but of those persons with whom he occasionally corresponded. The following is an instance of this kind attention and brotherly care. Sir Harry Trelawney had been a Calvinist, and during this period, had, I suppose been shy of Mr. Wesley's acquaintance. At length being convinced, that, the narrow, limited views of John Calvin, concerning the atonement of Christ, were not agreeable to the general tenor of the invitations, promises, and threatenings of the New Testament, he quitted them, and the party of the Calvinists. On this occasion, Mr. Wesley wrote to him, congratulating him on his escape, but at the same time warning him of the danger of running into the opposite extreme. This is so natural to the human mind, that it is difficult to be avoided: and by yielding to this impulse in some doctrines of importance, it is to be feared that many have been destroyed. Experience, I think, will warrant the following observation: A speculative Calvinist, who, convinced of the errors of his system, becomes an Arminian so called, is in much greater danger of falling into low, mean, unscriptural notions of Christ and of the christian salvation, than a speculative Arminian, who becomes a Calvinist. Mr. Wesley

seems to have been of this opinion, when he kindly cautioned his friend, against the danger which lay before him. "For a long time," says he, "I have had a desire to see you, but could not find an opportunity; and indeed, I had reason to believe my company would not be agreeable: as you were intimate with those who think they do God service by painting me in the most frightful colors. It gives me much satisfaction to find, that you have escaped out of the hands of those warm men—it is not at all surprising that they should speak a little unkindly of you too, in their turn. It gave me no small satisfaction to learn from your own lips, the falsehood of their allegation. I believed it false before, but could not affirm it, so positively as I can now.

"Indeed it would not have been without precedent, if from one extreme, you had run into another. This was the case with that great man Dr. Taylor. For some years he was an earnest Calvinist; but afterwards, judging he could not get far enough from that melancholy system, he ran, not only into Arianism, but into the very dregs of Socinianism. I have reason indeed to believe he was convinced of his mistake, some years before he died. But to acknowledge this publicly, was too hard a task for one who had lived above eighty years.

"You have need to be thankful on another account likewise; that is, that your prejudices against the Church of England are removing. Having had an opportunity of seeing several of the churches abroad, and having deeply considered the several sorts of Dissenters at home, I am fully convinced, that our own church, with all her blemishes, is nearer the scriptural plan, than any other in Europe.

"I sincerely wish you may retain your former zeal for God; only, that it may be a zeal according to knowledge. But there certainly will be a danger of your sinking into a careless, lukewarm state, without any zeal or spirit at all. As you were surfeited with an irrational, unscriptural religion, you may easily slide into no religion at all: or, into a dead form, that will never make you happy either in this world, or in that which is to come. Wishing every scriptural blessing, both to Lady Trelawney and you,

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant,

J. W."

Notwithstanding Mr. Wesley's itinerancy, his daily labor of preaching, visiting the societies, and extensive correspondence; yet he still found time to read many books. And, what is rather singular, he often met with books that are very scarce, which many men of literature, with good libraries, have never seen; an instance of which will be given in speaking of the enlarged edition of his Philosophy—he read, not only books of divinity, of natural history, and moral philosophy, which came more immediately within the province of his profession, but

books which treated of the most remote antiquity. Here investigation is difficult, the highest degree of evidence to be attained, a bare probability, and the subjects discussed are rather curious than useful in the conduct of life. Yet even these books Mr. Wesley read, with uncommon diligence and care, often collecting the substance of them into a small compass. The following is an instance of this kind—Sept. 1, 1781, he says, "I made an end of reading that curious book, Dr. Parsons' Remains of Japhet. The very ingenious author has struck much light into some of the darkest parts of ancient history. And although I cannot subscribe to every proposition which he advances, yet I apprehend, he has sufficiently proved the main of his hypothesis: namely,

"1. That after the flood, Shem and his descendants peopled the greatest parts of Asia: 2. That Ham and his children peopled Africa: 3. That Europe was peopled by the two sons of Japhet, Gomer and Magog: the southern and south-western by Gomer, and his children: and the north and north-western, by the children of Magog: 4. That the former were called Gomerians, Cimmerians, and Cimbrians; and afterwards, Celtæ, Galatæ, and Gauls: the latter were called by the general name of Scythians, Scuti, and Scots: 5. That the Gomerians, spread swiftly through the north of Europe, as far as the Cimbrian Chersonesus, including Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and divers other countries, and then into Ireland, where they multiplied very early into a considerable nation: 6. That some ages after, another part of them, who had first settled in Spain, sailed to Ireland under Milea, or Milesius, and conquering the first inhabitants, took possession of the land: 7. That about the same time the Gomerians came to Ireland, the Magogians, or Scythians, came to Britain; so early, that both spake the same language, and well understood each other: 8. That the Irish spoken by the Gomerians, and the Welsh, spoken by the Magogians, are one and the same language, expressed by the same seventeen letters which were long after brought, by a Gomerian prince, into Greece: 9. That all the languages of Europe, Greek and Latin in particular, are derived from this: 10. That the Antediluvian language, spoken by all till after the flood, and then continued in the family of Shem, was Hebrew; and from this (the Hebrew) tongue, many of the eastern languages are derived. The foregoing particulars, this fine writer has made highly probable. And these may be admitted, though we do not agree to his vehement panegyric on the Irish language; much less receive all the stories told by the Irish poets, or chroniclers, as genuine authentic history."—Candor will readily acknowledge, and envy itself must confess, that a man in the seventy-ninth year of his age, who, in the midst of daily avocations which he deemed of the highest importance to himself and others, could go through a work of this kind with so much attention, and collect the substance of it into a few general heads, must have possessed great strength of mind, and no common degree of the spirit of inquiry.

In February, 1782, a person unknown proposed a few questions to Mr. Wesley in writing, and begged the favor of unequivocal answers. The questions and answers were as follows:

"Is it your wish that the people called Methodists should be, or become, a body entirely separate from the church?"

Answer. No.

"If not, where, that is, how often and where, I mean, upon what description of teachers of the establishment, are they to attend?"

Answer. I advise them to go to church.

"More particularly, if the fall, the corruption, and natural impotence of man, his free and full redemption in Christ Jesus, through faith working by love, should be taught and inculcated, and offered to the attention of all, at the church of the parish where they reside, are they then in your opinion, bound in conscience to hear, or may they at their own option, forbear?"

Answer. I do not think they are bound in conscience, to attend any *particular* church.

"Or if they are at liberty to absent themselves, are they at liberty, that is, have they a christian privilege, to censure this doctrine in the gross, to condemn such teachers, and boldly to pronounce them. 'blind leaders of the blind?'"

Answer. No: by no means.

"Whenever this happens, is it through prejudice, or rational piety? Is it through bigotry, or a catholic spirit? Is it consistent with christian charity? Is it compatible with a state of justification? Or, is it even allowable in the high habit of evangelical perfection?"

Answer. I think it is a sin."

About the latter end of this year, a report prevailed, and gained credit, that Administration had an intention to bring a Bill into the House for embodying the militia, and for exercising them on a Sunday. On this occasion, Mr. Wesley wrote the following letter to a nobleman, then high in office:

"My Lord,

"If I wrong your lordship I am sorry for it; but I really believe, your lordship fears God: and I hope your lordship has no unfavorable opinion of the christian revelation. This encourages me to trouble your lordship with a few lines, which otherwise I should not take upon me to do.

"Above thirty years ago, a motion was made in Parliament, for raising and embodying the militia, and for exercising them, to save time, on Sunday. When the motion was like to pass, an old gentleman stood up and said, 'Mr. Speaker, I have one objection to this: I believe an old book, called the Bible.' The members looked at one another, and the motion was dropped.

"Must not all others, who believe the Bible, have the very same objection? And from what I have seen, I cannot but think, these

are still three-fourths of the nation. Now, setting religion out of the question, is it expedient to give such a shock to so many millions of people at once? And certainly it would shock them extremely: it would wound them in a very tender part. For would not they, would not all England, would not all Europe, consider this as a virtual repeal of the Bible? And would not all serious persons say, 'We have little religion in the land now; but by this step we shall have less still.' For wherever this pretty show is to be seen, the people will flock together; and will lounge away so much time before and after it, that the churches will be emptier than they are already!

"My lord, I am concerned for this on a double account. First, because I have personal obligations to your lordship, and would fain, even for this reason, recommend your lordship to the love and esteem of all over whom I have any influence. Secondly, because, I now reverence your lordship for your office' sake, and believe it to be my bounden duty, to do all that is in my little power, to advance your lordship's influence and reputation.

"Will your lordship permit me, to add a word in my old-fashioned way? I pray Him that has all power in heaven and earth, to prosper all your endeavors for the public good, and am,

My lord,
Your lordship's willing servant,
JOHN WESLEY."

The Methodists had now subsisted under this appellation, about half a century. Yet the public at large had very imperfect notions of their principles, and scarcely knew anything of their internal economy. The most candid writers in opposition to them, were grossly ignorant in these respects; and others did not scruple a little misrepresentation. If this was the case at home, we cannot suppose that the representations of them, would be more accurate abroad. The foreign journalists would naturally copy from our own, and from those who had expressly written against them. This has been the situation of most denominations of Christians, who have been obnoxious to the rulers, either of an establishment, or, of any very popular or powerful party. And from what has happened in our own time, we may well conjecture what has taken place in times past, when ignorance and prejudice were much more predominant, and the means of accurate knowledge much less general. Thus, the accounts we now have of the ancient heretics, are almost wholly taken from the representations of their avowed enemies, or from those who only retailed common reports. And such was the case at present, with respect to the character of the Methodists in foreign countries. In November, Mr. Wesley received a letter from Dr. Burekhardt, pastor of the German Church at the Savoy. The doctor informs him—that he had lately read in a German periodical publication, a most ill-natured account of the Methodists in England: that he thought it his

duty to oppose these prejudices in his own country, which he deemed injurious to the interests of Christianity: that he intended to write a true history of Methodism, describing its origin, nature, progress, and present state, for the benefit of his countrymen: and, that he requested Mr. Wesley, to direct him to authentic materials for such a work, and help him to procure them.*—The design was candid and liberal; but whether it was executed, or not, I cannot say.

It has already been observed, that a party existed among the preachers, who wished the Methodists to be erected into an independent body, and a total separation to be made from the established church. One of this party was frequently about Mr. Wesley's person; and under various pretences sometimes led him into measures, that offended the people and embarrassed his affairs, while the true author lay concealed, as much as possible, behind the scene. In December, Mr. Wesley received a letter from a friend, of which only a part has been preserved; but this part throws some light on the present state of things. "And first," says the writer, "I would advise you to speak comfortably to the people, who are irritated to a high degree against you. The die is not yet cast: you are not yet in as bad a situation as England is with regard to America. A few comfortable words, might yet make them your own forever. Let not your sun go down under a cloud. Stain not with disgrace,† every action of your whole life. Leave the event to Providence: you cannot prevent a separation of your preachers‡ after you are gone to rest; why should you see it in your life-time? A door is open for you at Bristol, and a comfortable door too: why should you leave the word of God to serve tables? at the instigation of those, who would be glad to see your head laid in the dust, if they might sit in

* The original letter is as follows:

"Viro summe Reverendo J. Wesley,
S. P. D.

Johannes Theophilus Burekhardt, Pastor Germ. ad ædem St. Mariæ (Savoy.)

"Legi nuperrime, in libro quodam germanico periodico, judicia perversissima de Methodistis in Anglia. Mei itaque esse puto, istiusmodi præconceptis opinionibus, quæ sunt rei christianæ valde noxiæ, in patria mea obviam ire, veramque Methodismi historiam, originem, naturam, fata ac statum præsentem popularibus meis enarrare ac describere. Peto igitur a Te, Vir Venerande, ut mihi, talem historiam scripturo, genuinos fontes indicare, atque scripta suppeditare velis, quibus ista historia jam pertractata est, et quæ ad illustrandam illam faciunt. Pittius, unus ex prædecessoribus meis, sine dubio Tibi non ignotus fuit. Cæterum, ex animo precor Deum, Patrem Domini nostri Jesu Christi, ut in commodum ecclesiæ suæ, senectutem Tuam juvenili robore induere atque ornare, Teque diu inter nos in posterum conservare velit. Vale, mihique fave!

Londini, in Savoy-Square, d. 28 Novbr. 1782.

† The writer of the letter had expressed himself thus, "Stain not, as it were with blood, every action," &c. This was very improper, having no analogy to the subject in hand. I have therefore, left out the words, "As it were," and changed the word blood for disgrace, which seems to convey the writer's idea. Through an eagerness to express himself in the strongest manner possible, he fell into an impropriety of expression.

‡ I suppose he means, from the Church.

your chair! One would think you might, with almost half an eye, see what some of them are aiming at. May the God of peace open your eyes; and direct you to act in such a manner as will disappoint our grand adversary of his unlawful prey.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your well wisher, and humble servant,

J. M."

In June, 1783, Mr. Wesley went over to Holland, and spent his birthday, completing the eightieth year of his age, in this country. He seemed pleased with his visit, though the motives for making it are not very obvious. It is not probable, that the design originated with himself; and any conjectures concerning the reasons why others put him upon it, might be false, and appear ill-natured or invidious.

The year 1784, brings us to the grand climacterical year of Methodism. Not indeed, if we number the years of its existence, but if we regard the changes which now took place in the form of its *original* Constitution. Not that these changes destroyed at once the *original* Consitution of Methodism: this would have been too great a shock; but the seeds of its corruption and final dissolution, were this year solemnly planted, and have since been carefully watered and nursed by a powerful party among the preachers. The changes to which I allude, were, 1. The Deed of Declaration; and, 2. Ordination. These undoubtedly laid the foundation of a New Order of things among the Methodists, hitherto unknown; and we may easily suppose, that those who favored it, would make themselves certain of success, by a little patience and good management.

The Deed of Declaration, is dated the 28th of February. It is entitled, "The Rev. John Wesley's Declaration and Establishment of the Conference of the people called Methodists." And in the attested copy is said to be, "Enrolled in his Majesty's High Court of Chancery."—I shall endeavor to state the substance of the *Preamble* to this famous Deed, as concisely as possible, to retain the sense complete.—It says, that, *Whereas* divers buildings commonly called Chapels with a Messuage and Dwelling-House—situate in various parts of Great-Britain, have been given and conveyed from time to time by the said John Wesley, to certain persons and their heirs in each of the said gifts and conveyances named—Upon Trust, that the trustees in the several deeds respectively named, and the survivors of them—and the Trustees for the time being to be elected as in the said deeds is appointed, should permit the said John Wesley, and such other persons as he should for that purpose nominate and appoint, at all times during his life—to have and enjoy the free use and benefit of the said premises—therein to preach and expound God's Holy Word: And upon further trust, that the said respective Trustees, &c. should permit Charles Wesley, brother of the said John Wesley, and such other persons as the said Charles Wesley should for that purpose

—nominate and appoint, in like manner during his life. And after the decease of the survivor of them, the said John and Charles Wesley, Then upon further Trust, That the said respective Trustees, &c. should permit such persons, and for such time and times as should be appointed at the yearly Conference of the people called Methodists in London, Bristol, or Leeds, and no others, to have and enjoy the said premises for the purposes aforesaid: And whereas divers persons have in like manner given or conveyed many Chapels, &c. situate in various parts of Great Britain, and also in Ireland, to certain trustees, in each of the said gifts and conveyances respectively named, upon the like trusts, and for the same uses and purposes as aforesaid (except only that in some of the said gifts and conveyances, no life estate or other Interest is thereby given and reserved to the said Charles Wesley.) And whereas, for rendering effectual the trusts created by the said several gifts or conveyances, and that no doubt or litigation may arise with respect to the interpretation and true meaning thereof, it has been thought expedient by the said John Wesley, on behalf of himself as donor of the several Chapels, &c. as of the donors of the said other Chapels, &c.—to explain the words 'yearly Conference of the people called Methodists,' contained in all the said trust deeds, and to declare what persons are members of the said Conference, and how the succession and identity thereof is to be continued: Now therefore these presents witness, that for accomplishing the aforesaid purposes, the said John Wesley doth hereby declare, that the Conference of the people called Methodists, in London, Bristol, or Leeds, ever since there hath been any yearly Conference of the people called Methodists—hath always heretofore consisted of the preachers, commonly called Methodist preachers, in connexion with, and under the care of the said John Wesley, whom he hath thought expedient year after year to summon to meet him—to advise with them for the promotion of the gospel of Christ to appoint the said persons so summoned, and the other preachers also in connexion with and under the care of the said John Wesley not summoned to yearly Conference, to the use and enjoyment of the said Chapels—the names of all which persons so summoned and appointed, with the Chapels to which they were so appointed, together with the duration of such appointments—with all other matters transacted at the said yearly Conference, have year by year been printed and published under the title of minutes of Conference. The deed then goes on to state the declaration and establishment of the Conference in the following words, "And these presents further witness, and the said John Wesley doth hereby avouch and further declare that the several persons herein after named, to wit"—After mentioning by name one hundred of the preachers, it further states that these—"Being preachers and expounders of God's Holy Word, under the care and in connexion with the said John Wesley, have been, now are, and do, on the day of the date hereof, constitute

The members of the said Conference, according to the true intent and meaning of the said several gifts and conveyances wherein the words, 'Conference of the people called Methodists' are mentioned and contained. And that the said several persons before-named, and their successors forever, to be chosen as herein-after mentioned, are, and shall forever be construed, taken, and be, the Conference of the people called Methodists. Nevertheless upon the terms and subject to the Regulations herein-after prescribed; that is to say,

"First. That the members of the said Conference and their successors for the time being forever, shall assemble once in every year, at London, Bristol, or Leeds (except as after mentioned) for the purposes aforesaid; and the time and place of holding every subsequent Conference shall be appointed at the preceding one, save that the next Conference after the date hereof, shall be holden at Leeds in Yorkshire, the last Tuesday in July next.

"Second. The act of the majority in number of the Conference assembled as aforesaid, shall be had, taken, and be the act of the whole Conference to all intents, purposes, and constructions whatsoever.

"Third. That after the Conference shall be assembled as aforesaid, they shall first proceed to fill up all the Vacancies occasioned by death or absence, as after mentioned.

"Fourth. No act of the Conference assembled, as aforesaid, shall be had, taken, or be the act of the Conference, until forty of the members thereof are assembled, unless reduced under that number by death, since the prior Conference or absence as after mentioned; nor until all the vacancies occasioned by death or absence shall be filled up by the election of new members of the Conference, so as to make up the number one hundred, unless there be not a sufficient number of persons objects of such election: and during the assembly of the Conference there shall always be forty members present at the doing of any act, save as aforesaid, or otherwise such acts shall be void.

"Fifth. The duration of the yearly assembly of the Conference, shall not be less than five days, nor more than three weeks, and be concluded by the appointment of the Conference, if under twenty-one days; or otherwise the conclusion thereof shall follow of course at the end of the said twenty-one days; the whole of all which said time of the assembly of the Conference shall be had, taken, considered, and be the yearly Conference of the people called Methodists, and all acts of the Conference during such yearly assembly thereof, shall be the acts of the Conference and none others.

"Sixth. Immediately after all the vacancies occasion by death or absence are filled up by the election of new members as aforesaid, the Conference shall choose a President and Secretary of their assembly out of themselves, who shall continue such until the election of another President or Secretary in the next, or other subsequent Confer-

ence; and the said President shall have the privilege and power of two members in all acts of the Conference during his presidency, and such other powers, privileges, and authorities, as the Conference shall from time to time see fit to intrust into his hands.

"Seventh. Any member of the Conference absenting himself from the yearly assembly thereof for two years successively, without the consent or dispensation of the Conference, and be not present on the first day of the third yearly assembly thereof at the time and place appointed for the holding of the same, shall cease to be a member of the Conference from and after the said first day of the said third yearly assembly thereof, to all intents and purposes, as though he was naturally dead. But the Conference shall and may dispense with or consent to the absence of any member from any of the said yearly assemblies, for any cause which the Conference may see fit or necessary, and such member whose absence shall be so dispensed with, or consented to by the Conference, shall not by such absence cease to be a member thereof.

"Eighth. The Conference shall and may expel and put out from being a member thereof, or from being in connexion therewith, or from being on trial, any person member of the Conference admitted into connexion, or upon trial, for any cause which to the Conference may seem fit or necessary; and every member of the Conference so expelled and put out, shall cease to be a member thereof to all intents and purposes, as though he was naturally dead. And the Conference immediately after the expulsion of any member thereof as aforesaid, shall elect another person to be a member of the Conference in the stead of such member so expelled.

"Ninth. The Conference shall and may admit into connexion with them, or upon trial, any person or persons whom they shall approve, to be preachers and expounders of God's holy word, under the care and direction of the Conference, the name of every such person or persons so admitted into connexion, or upon trial, as aforesaid, with the time and degrees of the admission, being entered in the Journals or Minutes of the Conference.

"Tenth. No person shall be elected a member of the Conference who hath not been admitted in connexion with the Conference as a preacher and expounder of God's holy word, as aforesaid, for twelve months.

"Eleventh. The Conference shall not nor may nominate or appoint any person to the use and enjoyment of, or to preach and expound God's holy word in, any of the Chapels and premises so given or conveyed, or which may be given or conveyed on the trusts aforesaid, who is not either a member of the Conference, or admitted into connexion with the same, or upon trial as aforesaid; nor appoint any person for more than three years successively to the use and enjoyment of any Chapels and premises already given, or to be given or

conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, except ordained ministers of the Church of England.

"Twelfth. That the Conference shall and may appoint the place of holding the yearly assembly thereof at any other city, town, or place than London, Bristol, or Leeds, when it shall seem expedient so to do.

"Thirteenth. And for the convenience of Chapels and premises already or which may hereafter be given or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, situate in Ireland or other parts out of the kingdom of Great Britain, the Conference shall and may when and as often as it shall seem expedient, but not otherwise, appoint and delegate any member or members of the Conference with all or any of the powers, privileges, and advantages herein before contained or vested in the Conference; and all and every the acts, admissions, expulsions, and appointments whatsoever of such member or members of the Conference so appointed and delegated as aforesaid, the same being put into writing, and signed by such delegate or delegates, and entered in the Journals or Minutes of the Conference and subscribed as after mentioned, shall be deemed, taken, and be, the acts, admissions, expulsions, and appointments of the Conference, to all intents, constructions, and purposes whatsoever, from the respective times when the same shall be done by such delegate or delegates, notwithstanding anything herein contained to the contrary.

"Fourteenth. All resolutions and orders touching elections, admissions, expulsions, consents, dispensations, delegations or appointments and acts whatsoever of the Conference, shall be entered and written in the Journals or Minutes of the Conference which shall be kept for that purpose, publicly read, and then subscribed by the President and Secretary thereof for the time being, during the time such Conference shall be assembled; and when so entered and subscribed, shall be had, taken, received, and be the acts of the Conference, and such entry and subscription as aforesaid shall be had, taken, received, and be evidence of all and every such acts of the said Conference and of their said delegates without the aid of any other proof; and whatever shall not be so entered and subscribed as aforesaid, shall not be had, taken, received, or be the act of the Conference: and the said President and Secretary are hereby required and obliged to enter and subscribe as aforesaid every act whatever of the Conference.

"Lastly. Whenever the said Conference shall be reduced under the number of forty members, and continue so reduced for three yearly assemblies thereof successively, or whenever the members thereof shall decline or neglect to meet together annually for the purposes aforesaid, during the space of three years, that then, and in either of the said events, the Conference of the people called Methodists shall be extinguished, and all the aforesaid powers, privileges, and advantages shall cease, and the said Chapels and premises, and all other

Chapels and premises which now are, or hereafter may be settled, given or conveyed, upon the trusts aforesaid, shall vest in the Trustees for the time being of the said Chapels and premises respectively, and their successors forever: Upon Trust that they, and the survivors of them, and the Trustees for the time being, do, shall, and may appoint such person and persons to preach and expound God's holy word therein, and to have the use and enjoyment thereof, for such time and in such manner as to them shall seem proper."

Before I make any observations on this Deed, the reader should be apprized, that, neither the design of it, nor the words of the several clauses are to be imputed to Mr. Wesley. So far was he from forming any design of a deed of this kind, that I have good evidence to assert, it was some time before he could be prevailed upon to comply with the proposal: and, as in most other cases where he followed the same guide, he soon found reason to repent. That Mr. Wesley did actually repent of signing this deed, is pretty evident from the following letter which he wrote about a year afterwards, and committed to a friend to deliver to the Conference, at their first meeting after his decease.

"My Dear Brethren,

"Some of our travelling preachers have expressed a fear, that after my decease you would exclude them, either from preaching in connexion with you, or from some other privileges which they now enjoy. I know no other way to prevent any such inconvenience, than to leave these my last words with you.

"I beseech you by the mercies of God, that you never avail yourselves of the Deed of Declaration, to assume any superiority over your brethren: but let all things go on, among those itinerants who choose to remain together, exactly in the same manner as when I was with you, so far as circumstances will permit.

"In particular I beseech you, if you ever loved me, and if you now love God and your brethren, to have no respect of persons in stationing the preachers, in choosing children for Kingswood School, in disposing of the yearly contribution and the preachers' fund, or any other public money: but do all things with a single eye, as I have done from the beginning. Go on thus, doing all things without prejudice or partiality, and God will be with you even to the end."

But it would be improper in a work of this kind, to pass over this Deed without making an observation or two upon it. Now the first thing that strikes me, is the title itself. "A Declaration and Establishment of the Conference of the People called Methodists." This surely is a most incongruous title. It is well known that the people called Methodists, never held a Conference since Methodism existed. The Conference is an assembly of itinerant preachers only;*

* Except two or three clergymen.

and its members are not assembled by any authority derived from the people. When sitting, it exercises powers which are neither derived from the people, nor under any control by them. It elects members into its own body, or excludes them at pleasure: it makes regulations, or laws, not only for the itinerant preachers, but for all ranks and orders of persons in the societies: and while these things are transacted, neither local preachers, trustees of chapels, stewards, leaders, or any of the people, have a single voice, or a single representative in the assembly. The people have no check, no balance of power, against any regulation or law the Conference may choose to decree. It is difficult therefore to conceive, why this assembly of a few preachers, was called, "The Conference of the people called Methodists;" unless it was to give the people a hint, that they *ought* to have some representatives in an assembly where laws are made, by which they, as Methodists, are to be governed.

The second observation shall be upon the words of the Deed in which it states that the one hundred preachers therein named, "Have been, now are, and do on the day of the date hereof, continue the members of the said Conference, according to the true intent and meaning of the said gifts and conveyances wherein the words Conference, &c. are mentioned and contained." That is, these preachers had been the Conference before the Deed of Declaration existed; and did actually continue it, on the day this Deed was executed: that the word Conference, in the old Trust Deeds of all the Chapels, meant neither more nor less, than the hundred preachers mentioned by name in this Deed of Declaration! Now, every one of these assertions is a notorious falsehood: there is not even the shadow of truth in any one of them. But it seems there was a necessity for stating the matter thus, however false, in order to give some color of justice and validity to this new deed. For had it appeared on the face of it, that Deeds of Trust already existed, in which the words Conference, &c. meant either more or less than the hundred preachers in this Deed named; it would have been evident at first sight, that the Deed itself was nugatory and void to all intents and purposes; as it could not possibly annul, or do away the legality of deeds already existing and duly executed, without the consent of the several parties concerned, first had and obtained under their respective signatures. Thus we see, that this famous Deed of Declaration and Establishment of the Conference, is founded on as gross a misrepresentation of facts, as ever disgraced any public instrument.

This Deed affords ample scope for many other observations: but having shown that it is altogether built on a mis-statement of facts, I shall stop; as nothing more seems necessary to be said upon it at present: except perhaps, that Mr. Wesley, in all probability did not understand the import of the several clauses of it, as he never had patience to attend to any paper drawn up in the common forms of

the law. In these cases he trusted to those about him who had examined it.

The Deed of Declaration affected only the itinerant preachers: but when Mr. Wesley ordained some of the itinerants, a foundation was laid for a change in the ancient constitution of Methodism, of much more extensive influence; and which in the end is likely to affect every member of the society. It has already appeared in this history, that Mr. Wesley claimed the power or right of ordaining to the ministry, but said, it was not probable that he should ever exercise it. We have likewise seen, how steadily for a long course of years, he resisted every measure which tended to alter the relative situation of the societies to the established church, and to the various denominations of Dissenters to which any of the members might belong. It is not easy to assign a sufficient reason why Mr. Wesley, in the eighty-second year of his age, should depart from a line of conduct he had hitherto so strictly observed; especially if he acted according to his own judgment, and of his own free choice. However this may be, a plan was proposed in private, to a few clergymen who attended the Conference this year at Leeds, that Mr. Wesley should ordain one or two preachers for the societies in America. But the clergymen opposed it. Mr. Fletcher was consulted by letter; who advised, that a bishop should be prevailed upon, if possible, to ordain them, and then Mr. Wesley might appoint them to such offices in the societies as he thought proper, and give them letters testimonial of the appointments he had given them. Mr. Wesley well knew, that no bishop would ordain them at his recommendation, and therefore seemed inclined to do it himself. In this purpose however, he appeared so languid, if not wavering, that Dr. Coke thought it necessary to use some further means to urge him to the performance of it. Accordingly, August 9, Mr. Wesley being then in Wales on his way to Bristol, the doctor sent him the following letter:

"Honored and dear Sir,

"The more maturely I consider the subject, the more expedient it appears to me, that the power of ordaining others, should be received by me from you, by the imposition of your hands; and that you should lay hands on brother Whatcoat, and brother Vasey, for the following reasons: 1. It seems to me the most scriptural way, and most agreeable to the practice of the primitive churches: 2. I may want all the influence in America, which you can throw into my scale. Mr. Brackenbury informed me at Leeds, that he saw a letter in London from Mr. Asbury, in which he observed, that he would not receive any person deputed by you with any part of the superintendency of the work invested in him: or words which evidently implied so much. I do not find any, the least degree of prejudice in my mind against Mr. Asbury, on the contrary, a very great love and esteem; and am determined not to stir a finger without his consent,

unless mere sheer necessity obliges me; but rather to lie at his feet in all things. But as the journey is long, and you cannot spare me often, and it is well to provide against all events, and an authority formally received from you will (I am conscious of it) be fully admitted by the people, and my exercising the office of Ordination without that formal authority may be disputed, if there be any opposition on any other account: I could therefore earnestly wish you would exercise that power, in this instance, which I have not the shadow of a doubt but God hath invested you with for the good of our connexion. I think you have tried me too often to doubt, whether I will in any degree use the power you are pleased to invest me with, farther than I believe absolutely necessary for the prosperity of the work. 3. In respect of my brethren (brother Whatcoat and Vasey) it is very uncertain indeed, whether any of the clergy mentioned by brother Rankin, will stir a step with me in the work, except Mr. Jarrit; and it is by no means certain that even he will choose to join me in ordaining: and propriety and universal practice make it expedient, that I should have two presbyters with me in this work. In short, it appears to me that everything should be prepared, and everything proper be done, that can possibly be done this side the water. You can do all this in Mr. C——n's house, in your chamber; and afterwards (according to Mr. Fletcher's advice) give us letters testimonial of the different offices with which you have been pleased to invest us. For the purpose of laying hands on brothers Whatcoat and Vasey, I can bring Mr. C—— down with me, by which you will have two presbyters with you. In respect to brother Rankin's argument, that you will escape a great deal of odium by omitting this, it is nothing. Either it will be known, or not known; if not known, then no odium will arise: but if known, you will be obliged to acknowledge that I acted under your direction, or suffer me to sink under the weight of my enemies, with perhaps your brother at the head of them. I shall entreat you to ponder these things.

Your most dutiful,

T. Coke."*

This letter affords matter for several observations, both of the serious and comic kind: but I shall not indulge myself on the occasion it so fairly offers. The attentive reader who examines every part of it, will be at no loss to conjecture, to whose influence we must impute Mr. Wesley's conduct in the present business. That Mr. Wesley should suffer himself to be so far influenced, in a matter of the utmost importance both to his own character and to the societies, by a man, of whose judgment in advising, and talents in conducting any affair he had no very high opinion, is truly astonishing: but so it was!—Mr. Wesley came to Bristol, and September 1, everything

* This letter is taken from an attested copy of the doctor's letter, in Mr. Charles Wesley's handwriting.

being prepared as proposed above, he complied with the doctor's earnest wish, by consecrating him one of the bishops, and Mr. Whatcoat and Vasey presbyters of the new Methodist Episcopal Church in America. No doubt the three gentlemen were highly gratified with their new titles; as we often see, both young and *old children* gratified with gilded toys, though clumsily made, and of no real worth or valuable use, except to quiet the cries of those for whom they are prepared.

The difficulties on the first entrance into this new path being now overcome, and the opening prospects being highly flattering to the human mind tutored under certain circumstances, some further progress became natural and easy. Accordingly, it was not long before three more preachers were ordained for Scotland; and afterwards at different periods, several others were ordained: but all of them at first, were laid under a restriction not to exercise their ministerial functions in England. Since the death of Mr. Wesley, still further progress has been made, not only in the practice of ordaining, but in the exercise of their new functions, in various societies in this kingdom. But hitherto this new order of things has produced the most lamentable effects, having caused contention, and kindled the flames of party zeal.

CHAPTER V.

OPINIONS AND DEBATES, &c. ON THE NEW PLAN OF ORDINATION: SEVERAL PARTICULARS OF THE LAST YEARS OF MR. WESLEY'S LIFE; WITH AN ACCOUNT OF HIS DEATH IN MARCH, 1791. HIS LAST WILL, &c.

The following is part of a letter from one preacher to another, when the report that Mr. Wesley had ordained some of the preachers, first began to be circulated in the societies. It may serve to show us what opinion the uninfected itinerants entertained of this strange business. "Ordination—among Methodists! Amazing indeed! I could not force myself to credit the report which spread here, having not then seen the minutes; but now I can doubt it no longer. And so, we have Methodist parsons of our own! And a new mode of ordination, to be sure—on the Presbyterian plan?—In spite of a million of declarations to the contrary! I am fairly confounded.—Now the ice is broke, let us conjecture a little the probable issue of this new thing in the earth.—You say, we must reason and debate the matter.—Alas! it is too late. Surely it never began in the midst of a multitude of counsellors; and I greatly fear the Son of man was not secretary of state, or not present when the business was brought on and carried, I suppose, with very few dissentient voices.—Who could imagine that this important matter would have

stole into being, and be obtruded upon the body, without their being so much as apprized of it, or consulted on so weighty a point? Who is the father of this monster, so long dreaded by the father of his people, and by most of his sons? Whoever he be, time will prove him a felon to Methodism, and discover his assassinating knife sticking fast in the vitals of its body. This has been my steadfast opinion for years past; and years to come will speak in groans the opprobrious anniversary of our religious madness for gowns and bands.—Will it not sting a man that has been honored by his Lord and Master for many years as a lay-preacher, to have a black-robed boy, flirting away in the exercise of his sacred office, set over him?—If not all, but only a few *favorites* are to be honored, will it not raise a dust, that will go nigh to blind the eyes of the whole body?"—Another old preacher, writing to his friend, delivers his opinion to the following purpose—I wish they had been asleep when they began this business of ordination: it is neither Episcopal nor Presbyterian: but a mere hodge-podge of inconsistencies—though it must be allowed, that Mr. Wesley acted under the influence of others, yet he had some reasons for the step he took, which at the moment appeared to him sufficient to justify it. Perhaps they may not appear in the same light to others, and probably would not to himself, had he not been biassed by persuasion. A part of the reasons of his conduct in this affair, are detailed in the letter testimonial, which Dr. Coke carried over with him to the American Conference. It is addressed, "To Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our brethren in North America:" and is conceived in the following terms:

"By a very uncommon train of providences, many of the provinces of North America, are totally disjoined from their mother-country, and erected into independent states. The English government has no authority over them either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the states of Holland. A civil authority is exercised over them, partly by the Congress, partly by the provincial assemblies. But no one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all. In this peculiar situation, some thousands of the inhabitants of these states desire my advice; and in compliance with their desire, I have drawn up a little sketch.

"Lord King's* account of the primitive church convinced me

* King (Peter,) Lord High Chancellor of England, was descended of a good family of that name in Somersetshire, and son of an eminent grocer and salter in the city of Exeter in Devonshire. He was born at Exeter in 1669, and bred up for some years to his father's business. But his inclination to learning was so great, that he laid out all the money he could spare in books, and devoted every moment of his leisure hours to study; so that he became an excellent scholar before the world suspected any such thing: and gave the public a proof of his skill in church history, in his Inquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship of the Primitive Church, that flourished within the first three hundred years after Christ. London, 1691, and 1713, in 8vo. This was written with a view to promote the scheme of a comprehension of the Dissenters.

His acquaintance with Mr. Locke, to whom he was related, and who left him his library

many years ago, that bishops and presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain. For many years I have been *importuned* from time to time, to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our travelling preachers. But I have still refused: not only for peace' sake; but because I was determined, as little as possible, to violate the established order of the national church to which I belonged.

"But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither any parish ministers. So that for some hundred miles together, there is none either to baptize or to administer the Lord's Supper. Here therefore my scruples are at an end: and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, and invade no man's right, by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest.

"I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke, and Mr. Francis Asbury, to be joint Superintendents over our brethren in North America: as also Richard Whatcoat, and Thomas Vasey, to act as Elders among them, by baptizing and administering the Lord's Supper. And I have prepared a liturgy, little differing from that of the Church of England (I think, the best constituted national church in the world) which I advise all the travelling preachers to use on the Lord's day, in all the congregations, reading the Litany only on Wednesdays and Fridays, and praying extempore on all other days. I also advise the elders to administer the Supper of the Lord on every Lord's day.

"If any one will point out a more rational and scriptural way of feeding and guiding those poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method, than that I have taken.

"It has indeed been proposed, to desire the English bishops, to ordain part of our preachers for America. But to this I object, 1. I desired the bishops of London to ordain only one; but could not prevail: 2. If they consented, we know the slowness of their proceedings; but the matter admits of no delay. 3. If they would ordain them now, they would likewise expect to govern them. And how grievously would this entangle us! 4. As our American brethren are now totally

at his death, was of great advantage to him. By his advice, after he had studied some time in Holland, he applied himself to the study of the law; in which profession, his learning and diligence made him soon taken notice of. In the two last parliaments during the reign of King William, and in five parliaments during the reign of Queen Anne, he served as Burgess for Beer Alston in Devonshire. In 1702, he published, without his name, the History of the Apostles' Creed, with critical observations on its several articles; which is highly esteemed. In 1708, he was chosen Recorder of the city of London; and in 1710, was one of the members of the House of Commons at the trial of Dr. Sacheverell. In 1714, he was appointed Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas; and the April following was made one of the Privy Council. In 1715, he was created a Peer, by the title of Lord King, Baron of Ockham in Surry, and appointed Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain; in which post he continued till 1733, when he resigned; and in 1734, died at Ockham in Surry. See Encyclop. Brit.

disentangled both from the State, and from the English Hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again, either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive church. And we judge it best, that they should stand fast in that liberty, wherewith God has so strangely made them free.

JOHN WESLEY."

Before we proceed any further, let us pause a moment; and inquire, how far the general position laid down in this letter as the ground of Mr. Wesley's proceedings, agrees with his practice of ordination. He tells us, "Lord King's account of the primitive church convinced me many years ago, that bishops and presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain." But if this were even admitted, would it justify Mr. Wesley's practice on this occasion? I apprehend not. Let us suppose, that Mr. Wesley was as good an *Επισκοπος* as any in Europe; and Dr. Coke a regular presbyter; the position states that they had the same right to ordain. According to this principle then, Dr. Coke had the same right to ordain Mr. Wesley, that Mr. Wesley had to ordain Dr. Coke! and consequently the doctor's ordination was null and void to all intents and purposes: or, if the doctor received any right to ordain others, which he had not before, and which the very ceremony of ordination implies, then Mr. Wesley's general position as the ground of his practice, is not true. Thus we see, that Mr. Wesley's principle and practice in this affair directly oppose each other. If his principle was true, his practice was bad: if his practice was good, his principle was false: they cannot both stand good together. It is painful to see him fall into such a dilemma, which we have not seen before in the whole course of his life. When he began the practice of ordaining to the ministry, his brother, Mr. Charles, exclaimed,

"'T was age that made the breach, not he."

And if we add to this, the influence others had over him in this affair, it is perhaps, the best apology that can be made for his conduct.

In this business, Dr. Coke has reasoned in a manner much more consistent with his general practice, than Mr. Wesley; which has not indeed often been the case, and is therefore the more worthy of notice. He tells Mr. Wesley, in the letter above transcribed, "The more I consider the subject, the more expedient it appears to me, that the power of ordaining others, should be received by me from you, by the imposition of your hands." Among other reasons for this expediency, are the following: 1. "I may want all the influence in America, you can throw into my scale."—2. "An authority formally received from you, will be fully admitted by the people."—And 3. "My exercising the office of ordination without that formal authority may be disputed." Now all this is intelligible and clear; and I am confident these reasons would have satisfied any man in similar circumstances,

who had considered ordination as a mere stalking horse to gain influence and dominion.

Soon after the ordination, Dr. Coke, with his two companions, sailed for America; where they arrived in time to meet the American Conference held at Baltimore. Here the doctor opened his commission, and consecrated Mr. Asbury a bishop, and gave the societies formed by the preachers on that continent, a new name, calling them, "The Methodist Episcopal Church in America." He preached a sermon on this occasion, which was afterwards printed, and in which he labors to defend this new order of things. He begins this defence by the most severe censures on the clergy, and on the English Hierarchy. It has been supposed that the greatest part of what the doctor here published as his own, was written by Mr. Wesley. But I shall not easily believe, that these censures proceeded from his pen. It would answer no valuable purpose to transcribe them; but it may to observe the very striking difference between the proceedings at the commencement of Methodism, and the practice now adopted—"We are not Seceders," says Mr. Wesley, in the minutes of Conference. "nor do we bear any resemblance to them. We set out upon quite opposite principles. The Seceders laid the very foundation of their work, in judging and condemning others: we laid the foundation of our work, in judging and condemning ourselves. They begin every where, with showing their hearers, how fallen the church and ministers are: we begin every where, with showing our hearers, how fallen they are themselves."—Dr. Coke, in laying the foundation of his new church in America, adopted the principles and practice, in this respect, of the Seceders, and quitted those of the old Methodists. He tells Mr. Wesley, some time after, in a letter from Ireland, that he would as soon commit adultery as preach publicly against the church. But I must say this of the doctor, that, with respect to adultery I think him very innocent, but in bringing railing accusations against others, I think him very guilty. And it is very probable, that the Methodist Episcopal Church now forming in England, will have the same foundation as it had in America: the founders of it begin with judging and condemning others who dissent from them, and exalting themselves: some very glaring instances of which have already appeared. I leave others to judge of the consequences.

Dr. Coke, in his ordination sermon, and also in his congratulatory Address to general Washington, gives us to understand how much he is enraptured with the American Constitution; so far that he thinks it is fit to be an exemplar to all other nations.—But I leave the doctor's politics, to consider the defence he gives us of his new scheme of ordination.

"But what right have you to ordain?" To this question the doctor answers, "The same right as most of the reformed churches in Christendom: our ordination in its lowest view, being equal to any of

the Presbyterian, as originating with three presbyters of the Church of England."

It is possible the doctor might believe himself, when he wrote this sentence. But is it true, that the presence of three presbyters in a private chamber, is the only requisite essentially necessary to give validity to an ordination among the Presbyterians? I apprehend not. Nor do I know any denomination of Dissenters, among whom such a secret ordination would be deemed valid.

"But what right have you to exercise the episcopal office?" To this the doctor answers, "To me the most manifest and clear. God has been pleased, by Mr. Wesley, to raise up in America and Europe, a numerous society well known by the name of Methodists. The whole body have invariably esteemed this man as their chief pastor under Christ. He has always appointed their religious officers from the highest to the lowest, by himself or his delegate. And we are fully persuaded, there is no church-office which he judges expedient for the welfare of the people intrusted to his charge, but, as essential to his station, he has a power to ordain. After long deliberation, he saw it his duty to form his society in America into an independent church; but he loved the most excellent liturgy of the Church of England; he loved its rites and ceremonies, and therefore adopted them in most instances in the present case."

It is not easy to make observations on an argument like this, without falling into levity on the one hand; or too great severity on the other. Brevity, therefore, will be the best security. The doctor states the matter thus, "He (Mr. Wesley) has always appointed the religious officers from the highest to the lowest (among the Methodists) by himself or his delegate: and we are fully persuaded, there is no church-office which he judges expedient for the people, but as essential to his station he has power to ordain."—Now, if these words contain anything like an argument, they must mean, that the officers whom Mr. Wesley had always appointed, were church-officers; and consequently, that his societies were churches. If this be not the meaning, then the words which go before, have no immediate connexion with the conclusion drawn from them. The premises and the conclusion, would speak of two things totally different, and therefore the one could not be inferred from the other. But the minutes of Conference, and Mr. Wesley's other writings testify in the most express manner, that the Methodist societies were not churches: that the appointments and rules he made, were nothing more than prudential regulations, which he often changed as circumstances altered. It cannot, therefore, be argued, that because Mr. Wesley had always exercised the power of making prudential regulations for the government of his societies, he had a right to ordain any church-office he might judge expedient; which is a thing quite different from what he had hitherto attempted to do; and consequently no right to do it, could arise out of his former practice.

But there is another view of this argument, which makes it appear still more absurd. Whatever power Mr. Wesley had always exercised over the Methodist societies, it was no proof of his right. Power and right are two things. Power does not imply right: otherwise, the power of speech would imply a right to speak treason: the power of deceiving, and robbing, would imply a right so to do! Whatever right, therefore, Mr. Wesley might have for making prudential regulations for the societies, it cannot be proved from his power. But Dr. Coke here brings forward Mr. Wesley's power, and his former practice in the exercise of it, as a proof that he has a right to do what he may think expedient for the good of the people. Now, if a man in common life were to plead his former practice as a proof that he had a right to do what he might judge expedient in future, and should act upon this principle, I suppose he would soon be sent to Bedlam or to Newgate.

I shall only take notice of one article more in the doctor's sermon. "Besides," says he, "in addition to this, we have every qualification for an Episcopal church, which that of Alexandria, a church of no small note in the primitive times, possessed for two hundred years.—Our bishops or superintendents, as we rather call them, having been elected, or received by the suffrage of the whole body of our ministers through the continent, assembled in general Conference."

Now the truth of the fact is this; that the ordinations among the Methodists, bear no resemblance to the ordinations in any primitive church; either that of Alexandria, or any other, when deemed regular. Lord King, on whose authority Mr. Wesley seems to rest his cause, tells us, "At the ordinations of the clergy, the whole body of the people were present. So an African Synod, held 258, determined, 'That the ordination of ministers ought to be done with the knowledge, and in the presence of the people; that the people being present, either the crimes of the wicked may be detected, or the merits of the good declared; and so the ordination may be just and lawful, being approved by the suffrage of all.'"* To the same purpose speaks *Clemens Romanus;* an Apostolic man, who having been acquainted with the Apostles themselves, knew their customs in all the churches. He shows us in his first epistle to the Corinthians, that the custom was to ordain, *συνευδοκησασης τῆς εκκλησιας πασης*, with the consent of the whole church. So Origen says, in his 8th Homily on Leviticus, *requiri in ordinando sacerdote, præsentiam populi:*† "in ordaining a minister the presence of the people is necessary." The testimonies of the ancient writers on this head are very numerous, and might easily

* The words of Cyprian are, "Ordinationes Sacerdotales, non nisi sub populi assistentis conscientia fieri oportere, ut plebe præsente, vel detegantur malorum crimina, vel bonorum merita prædicentur, et sit ordinatio justa et legitima, quæ omnium suffragio et judicio fuerit examinata." Thus quoted by Lord King, p. 24, edit. 1713.

† See the note on the passage of Clemens Rom. above mentioned, in Le Clerc's edition of Cotelerius, tom. i. page 173.

be produced, but the authorities already mentioned will hardly be disputed. It is indeed evident from the Apostolical Constitutions, lib. 8, cap. 4, and other ancient testimonies, that in the first ages of the church, the people generally chose their own ministers; and in every case of an election, their consent and approbation was essentially necessary. And this practice continued, even at Rome, in the election of a pope till the beginning of the twelfth century, when Innocent II. changed the ancient custom; though I cannot think him quite innocent in so doing.

In direct opposition to the practice of the primitive church, the ordinations among the Methodists were performed in secret. The people were not assembled: they were not consulted; nor even so much as acquainted that ministers were to be ordained among the Methodists as their proper pastors. The whole was performed by an arbitrary power, in the exercise of which, no regard was had to the rights of the people, as having either judgment or choice in the matter.—But Dr. Coke tells us, they have the same qualifications for an Episcopal Church, which the Church of Alexandria possessed. "Our bishops," says he, "having been elected, or received, by the suffrage of the whole body of our ministers through the continent, assembled in general Conference."—There were but two bishops, so called, Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury. The doctor was ordained (or consecrated, if the reader choose) secretly in England, and received orders to ordain Mr. Asbury in America. Now these surely were not elected, in any sense whatever, either by the preachers or people. But, "They were elected or received."—When a writer thus links words together of different import, as though the meaning amounted to the same thing, we have just cause to suspect that he intends to deceive us, and lead us into a false notion of the subject he is discussing. Received perhaps they might be, under a system of arbitrary government, which leaves no alternative to the people, nor to many of the preachers, but that of passive obedience, or to go about their business and quit the connexion. But their being received in any way, is nothing to the point in hand. It is indeed manifest, that this whole affair, from first to last, bears no resemblance to the mode of electing and ordaining ministers in the purer ages of the primitive church.

As ordination among the Methodists forms a remarkable era in their history, it deserves to be fully examined, as to its validity and propriety. But before we proceed any further, let us see what Mr. Charles Wesley has said on the subject. In his letter to Dr. Chandler,* in the beginning of the year 1785, he says, "I can scarcely yet believe it, that in his eighty-second year, my brother, my old intimate friend and companion, should have assumed the Episcopal character: ordained elders, consecrated a bishop, and sent him over to ordain our

* One of the American bishops, ordained in England.

lay-preachers in America! I was then in Bristol, at his elbow: yet he never gave me the least hint of his intention. How was he surprized into so rash an action? He certainly persuaded himself that it was right.

"Lord Mansfield told me last year, that ordination was separation. This my brother does not, and will not see: or, that he has renounced the principles, and practice of his whole life; that he has acted contrary to all his declarations, protestations, and writings; robbed his friends of their boastings; realized the Nag's-head ordination; and left an indelible blot on his name, as long as it shall be remembered.

In August, Mr. Charles took courage, and wrote to his brother on the subject. "I have been reading," says he, "over again and again, your reasons against a separation—and entreat you in the name of God, and for Christ's sake, to read them again yourself with previous prayer; and stop, and proceed no further till you receive an answer to your inquiry, 'Lord, what wouldest Thou have me to do?'—Every word of your eleven pages deserves the deepest consideration: not to mention my testimony and hymns. Only the seventh, I could wish you to read—as a prophecy, which I pray God may never come to pass.

"Near thirty years since then, you have stood against the importunate solicitations of your preachers, who have scarcely at last prevailed. I was your natural ally, and your faithful friend: and while you continued faithful to yourself we two could chase a thousand. If they had not divided us, they could never have overcome you. But when once you began ordaining for America, I knew, and you knew, that your preachers here would never rest, till you ordained them. You told me, 'They would separate by and by.' The doctor tells us the same. His 'Methodist Episcopal Church at Baltimore,' was intended to beget a 'Methodist Episcopal Church' here. You know he comes armed with your authority to make us all Dissenters. One of your sons assured me, that not a preacher in London would refuse orders from the doctor. It is evident, that all seek their own, and prefer their own interest to your honor; which not one of them scruples to sacrifice, to his own ambition. Alas! what trouble are you preparing for yourself, as well as for me, and for your oldest, and truest, and best friends! Before you have quite broken down the bridge, stop, and consider! If your sons have no regard for you, have some regard for yourself. Go to your grave in peace; at least suffer me to go first, before this ruin be under your hand. So much, I think, you owe to my father, to my brother, and to me, as to stay till I am taken from the evil. I am on the brink of the grave, do not push me in; or imbitter my last moments. Let us not leave an indelible blot upon our memory, but let us leave behind us, the name and character of honest men."

Mr. John Wesley immediately answered his brother's letter. The

answer is dated Plymouth,* August 19; in which he says, "I will tell you my thoughts with all simplicity, and wait for better information. If you agree with me, well: if not, we can, as Mr. Whitefield used to say, agree to disagree.

"For these forty years I have been in doubt concerning that question, 'What obedience is due to heathenish priests, and mitred infidels.' I have from time to time proposed my doubts to the most pious and sensible clergymen I knew. But they gave me no satisfaction: rather they seemed to be puzzled as well as me. Some obedience I always paid to the bishops, in obedience to the laws of the land. But I cannot see, that I am under any obligation to obey them, further than those laws require.

"It is in obedience to those laws, that I have never exercised in England, the power which I believe God has given me. I firmly believe, I am a scriptural *Επίσκοπος*, as much as any man in England, or in Europe: for the uninterrupted succession, I know to be a fable, which no man ever did or can prove. But this does in no wise interfere with my remaining in the Church of England: from which I have no more desire to separate, than I had fifty years ago. I still attend all the ordinances of the church, at all opportunities. And I constantly and earnestly desire all that are connected with me, so to do. When Mr. Smyth pressed us to 'separate from the church,' he meant, go to church no more. And this was what I meant seven and twenty years ago, when I persuaded our brethren, 'not to separate from the church.' But here another question occurs, 'What is the Church of England?' It is not all the people of England. Papists and Dissenters are no part thereof. It is not all the people of England, except Papists and Dissenters. Then we should have a glorious church indeed? 'No: according to our twentieth Article, a particular church is, a congregation of faithful people (*Cœtus credentium*, the words of our Latin edition) among whom the word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered.' Here is a true logical definition, containing both the essence and the properties of a church. What then, according to this definition, is the Church of England? Does it mean, 'all the believers in England (except Papists and Dissenters) who have the word of God, and the sacraments duly administered among them?' I fear this does not come up to your idea of the Church of England. Well, what more do you include in that phrase? 'Why, all the believers that adhere to the doctrine and discipline established by the convocation under Queen Elizabeth.' Nay, that discipline is well nigh vanished away, and the doctrine both you and I adhere to.

"All those reasons, against a separation from the church in this sense, I subscribe to still. What then are you frightened at? I no

* The printed copy of this letter is dated Plymouth Dock. Arminian Mag. vol. ix. page 50.

more separate from it now, than I did in the year 1758. I submit still, though sometimes with a doubting conscience, to mitred infideis. I do indeed vary from them in some points of doctrine, and in some points of discipline: by preaching abroad, for instance, by praying extempore, and by forming societies. But not a hair's breadth further than I believe to be meet, right, and my bounden duty. I walk still by the same rule I have done for between forty and fifty years. I do nothing rashly. It is not likely I should. The high-day of my blood is over. If you will go hand in hand with me, do. But do not hinder me, if you will not help. Perhaps, if you had kept close to me, I might have done better. However, with or without help I creep on. And as I have been hitherto, so I trust I shall always be,

Your affectionate friend and brother."

In September Mr. Charles Wesley replied to his brother's letter. "I will tell you my thoughts," says he, "with the same simplicity. There is no danger of our quarrelling, for the second blow makes the quarrel; and you are the last man upon earth I would wish to quarrel with. That juvenile line of mine, 'Heathenish priests and mitred infidels,' I disown, renounce, and with shame recant. I never knew of more than one mitred infidel; and for him I took Mr. Law's word.

"I do not understand what 'obedience to the bishops' you dread. They have let us alone, and left us to act just as we pleased for these fifty years. At present, some of them are quite friendly towards us, particularly towards you. The churches are all open to you: and never could there be less pretence for a separation.

"That you are a scriptural *Επισκοπος*, or overseer, I do not dispute. And so is every minister who has the cure of souls. Neither need we dispute whether the uninterrupted succession be a fable, as you believe, or real, as I believe? or whether lord King be right or wrong? Your definition of the Church of England, is the same in prose, with mine in verse.—You write, 'All those reasons against a separation from the church, I subscribe to still. What then are you frightened at? I no more separate from it, than I did in the year 1758. I submit still to its bishops. I do indeed vary from them in some points of discipline, by preaching abroad, by praying extempore, and by forming societies, (might you not add, and by ordaining?) I still walk by the same rule I have done for between forty and fifty years. I do nothing rashly.'—If I could prove your actual separation, I would not; neither wish to see it proved by any other. But do you not allow, that the doctor has separated? Do you not know and approve of his avowed design and resolution, to get all the Methodists in the three kingdoms, formed into a distinct compact body, a new Episcopal church of his own? Have you seen his ordination sermon? Is the high-day of his blood over? Does he do nothing

rashly? Have you not made yourself the author of all his actions? I need not remind you, *Qui facit per alium, facit per se.*

"I must not leave unanswered your surprizing question, 'What then are you frightened at?' At the doctor's rashness; and your supporting him in his ambitious pursuits—at an approaching schism, as causeless and unprovoked as the American rebellion—at your own eternal disgrace, and all those frightful evils which your reasons describe.—'If you will go hand in hand with me, do'—I do go, or rather creep on in the old way in which we set out, and trust to continue in it till I finish my course.—'Perhaps, if you had kept close to me I might have done better'—When you took that fatal step at Bristol, I kept as close to you as close could be; for I was all the time at your elbow. You might certainly have done better, if you had taken me in to be one of your council.

"I thank you, for your intention to remain my friend. Herein my heart is, as your heart. Whom God hath joined, let not man put asunder. We have taken each other for better for worse, till death do us—part? no: but eternally unite. Therefore, in the love which never faileth, I am,

Your affectionate friend and brother,

C. WESLEY."

Mr. Charles Wesley has spoken chiefly of the impropriety of the step his brother had taken in ordaining Dr. Coke and others in the character of a bishop: but it will be proper to make an observation or two, on the validity of his proceeding. The general position he lays down in justification of what he had done, is, that "bishops and presbyters were the same order, and had the *same right* to ordain." Upon this principle he ordained, or consecrated Dr. Coke. Now, the very act of ordaining implies a superior right, or a superior authority. If it be allowed, that Mr. Wesley had a superior right to ordain the doctor, then the general position is false: if it be said, he had a superior authority, but no superior right, then it will follow that Mr. Wesley exercised superior authority without any right so to do; which is the very thing for which he is blamed. In both cases the ordination must be void, and of no effect.—But according to lord King, the general position is not strictly or universally true. From a comparison of various testimonies of ancient church writers, he draws this conclusion, That the presbyters were different from the bishops *in gradu*, or *in degree;* but they were equal to them *in ordine*, or, in order."* He tells us, that a bishop was the proper pastor or incumbent of the church over which he presided; and that the presbyters in that church were only his assistants or curates, and therefore could do nothing in his church without his direction or permission—but whatever superiority a bishop had over the presbyters of his own church, it was solemnly and publicly conferred upon him,

* Enquiry into the Constitution, &c. of the Primitive Church, page 54, et sequent.

by the general suffrage of the presbyters and people over whom he was to preside. I suppose, if any presbyter had assumed the Episcopal character and authority without such choice and public ordination to his office, he would have been excommunicated by the other churches. But Mr. Wesley was never publicly elected by any presbyters and people to the office of a bishop; nor ever consecrated to it: which made his brother Charles say,

> "So easily are Bishops made,
> By man's or woman's whim;
> Wesley his hands on Coke hath laid,
> But who laid hands on him?"

The answer is, nobody. His Episcopal authority, was a mere gratuitous assumption of power to himself, contrary to the usage of every church, ancient or modern, where the order of bishops has been admitted. There is no precedent either in the New Testament, or in church-history, that can justify his proceeding in this affair. And as Mr. Wesley had received no right to exercise Episcopal authority, either from any bishops, presbyters, or people, he certainly could not convey any right to others: his ordinations therefore, are spurious, and of no validity.

Nor can Mr. Wesley's practice of ordaining be justified by those reasons which Presbyterians adduce in favor of their own method of ordaining to the ministry: for Mr. Wesley ordained, not as a presbyter, but as a bishop! his ordinations therefore were not Presbyterian, nor will the arguments for Presbyterian ordination apply to them.

Let us review the arguments on this subject, reduced to a few propositions: 1. Mr. Wesley, in ordaining or consecrating Dr. Coke a bishop, acted in direct contradiction to the principle on which he attempts to defend his practice of ordaining at all. 2. As Mr. Wesley was never elected or chosen by any church to be a bishop, nor ever consecrated to the office, either by bishops or presbyters, he had not the shadow of right to exercise Episcopal authority in ordaining others, according to the rules of any church, ancient or modern. 3. Had he possessed the proper right to ordain, either as a bishop or presbyter (though he never did ordain as a presbyter) yet his ordinations being done in secret, were rendered thereby invalid and of no effect, according to the established order of the primitive church, and of all Protestant churches. 4. The consequence from the whole is, that the persons whom Mr. Wesley ordained, have no more right to exercise the ministerial functions than they had before he laid hands upon them.

A scheme of ordination so full of confusion and absurdity, as that among the Methodists, can surely never filiate itself on Mr. Wesley: it must have proceeded from some mere *chaotic* brain, where wild confusion reigns. Nor can I easily believe, that Mr. Wesley would ever have

adopted so mis-shapen a brat, had not his clear perception of things been rendered feeble and dim, by flattery, persuasion, and age.

But I willingly quit a subject which is very unpleasant; and most sincerely wish, that both the practice of ordaining among the Methodists, and the memory of it were buried in oblivion. And were the practice, which in my view of it is pregnant with mischief, totally to cease, never to be revived, I would tear the memory of it from these pages, as soon as they are printed.

The following letter written to a travelling preacher in December, 1786, may show us Mr. Wesley's fatherly care over the preachers; and at the same time give us an example of his delicate manner of conveying reproof where he saw it necessary. This delicacy will appear the more honorable to him when we consider, that he was in the eighty-fourth year of his age: a period when those who arrive at it, commonly lose the delicate attention to the feelings of others, which they possessed in middle life; and become authoritative and morose. This indeed is very natural, and arises, perhaps, from the difference of their situations. A man of eighty-four, often finds, that he is considered as a piece of old worn-out furniture, thrown by as useless, and feels his own personal happiness very little connected with the opinions or affairs of mankind: whereas, a man in the midst of life finds, that the delicate attention he pays to the feelings of others, is daily reflected back upon him in a thousand ways, and contributes largely to an increase of his personal happiness. Mr. Wesley did not labor under this infirmity of old age.—"Dear S—," says he, "you know I love you: ever since I knew you, I have neglected no way of showing it, that was in my power. And you know I esteem you for your zeal and activity, for your love of discipline, and for your gifts which God has given you: particularly, quickness of apprehension, and readiness of utterance, especially in preaching and prayer.

"Therefore I am jealous over you, lest you should lose any of the things you have gained, and not receive a full reward: and the more so, because I fear you are wanting in other respects. And who will venture to tell you so? You will scarce know how to bear it from me, unless you lift up your heart to God. If you do this, I may venture to tell you what I fear, without any further preface. I fear you think of yourself more highly than you ought to think. Do you not think too highly of your own understanding? of your gifts? particularly in preaching, as if you were the very best preacher in the connexion? of your own importance? as if the work of God here or there, depended wholly or mainly on you? and of your popularity? which I have found to my surprise far less, even in L——, than I expected.

"May not this be much owing to your want of brotherly love? With what measure you mete, men will measure to you again. I

fear there is something unloving in your spirit: something not only of roughness, but of harshness, yea of sourness! Are you not likewise extremely open to prejudice, and not easy to be cured of it? So that whenever you are prejudiced, you commence bitter, implacable, unmerciful? If so, that people are prejudiced against you, is both the natural and judicial consequence.

"I am afraid lest your want of love to your neighbors; should spring from your want of love to God: from want of thankfulness. I have sometimes heard you speak, in a manner that made me tremble: indeed, in terms that not only a weak Christian, but even a serious Deist would scruple to use.

"I fear, you greatly want evenness of temper. Are you not generally too high, or too low? Are not all your passions too lively? your anger in particular? Is it not too soon raised: and is it not often too impetuous? causing you to be violent, boisterous—bearing down all before you?

"Now—lift up your heart to God, or you will be angry at *me*. But I must go a little further. I fear you are greatly wanting in the government of your tongue. You are not exact in relating facts. I have observed it myself. You are apt to amplify: to enlarge a little beyond the truth. You cannot imagine, if others observe this, how it will affect your reputation.

"But I fear you are more wanting in another respect. That you give a loose to your tongue when you are angry: that your language then, is not only sharp, but coarse, and ill-bred—If this be so, the people will not bear it. They will not take it either from *you*, or *me*," &c.

Mr. Wesley, notwithstanding his advanced age, continued his journies and labors with the same punctuality, though not perhaps with the same vigor as usual. He still rose at four in the morning, and apportioned his employments to the different parts of the day. It was a fixed practical rule with him, which he observed to the very end of life, that a man who wishes to avoid temptation, and all foolish and hurtful habits, should be constantly employed: and generally, have a certain portion of work to do within a limited time. This, doubtless, is a good practical rule, and will save those whose time is at their own disposal, if they have resolution to follow it, from innumerable inconveniences.—In 1787, he visited Ireland: and passing through the north of that kingdom, called upon a respectable clergyman, whose kind attentions in his sickness at Tandragee had laid him under obligations. After he had quitted this agreeable family, he sent the clergyman the following letter.

"Rev. and dear Sir,

"I have obligations to you on many accounts, from the time I first saw you: particularly for the kind concern you showed, when I was ill at Tandragee. These have increased upon me every time that I

have since had the pleasure of waiting upon you. Permit me, sir, to speak without reserve. Esteem was added to my affectionate regard, when I saw the uncommon pains you took with the flock committed to your care; as also, when I observed the remarkably serious manner wherein you read prayers in your family. Many years have passed since that time; many more than I am likely to see under the sun. But before I go hence, I would fain give you one instance of my sincere regard: the rather, because I can scarce expect to see you again till we meet in a better world. But it is difficult for me to do it, as I feel myself inferior to you in so many respects. Yet permit me to ask a strange question, Is your soul as much alive to God as it was once? Have you not suffered loss from your relations or acquaintance, that are sensible and agreeable men, but not incumbered with religion? Some of them, perhaps, as free from the very form, as from the power of it? O sir, if you lose any of the things which you have wrought, who can make you amends for that loss? If you do not receive a full reward, what equivalent can you gain? I was pained, even at your hospitable table, in the midst of those I loved so well. We did not *begin* and *close* the meal, in the same manner you did ten years ago! You was then contrary to almost universal custom, unfashionably serious in asking a blessing and returning thanks. I know many would blame you for it: but surely the Lord said, 'Servant of God, well done!' Wishing you, and your lovely family every blessing,

I am,

Rev. and dear sir,

Your obliged and affectionate brother and servant,

J. W."

In February, 1788, Mr. Wesley observes, "I took a solemn leave of the congregation at West street, by applying once more what I had enforced fifty years before, 'By grace ye are saved through faith.' The next evening we had a very numerous congregation at the New Chapel, to whom I declared the whole counsel of God. I seemed now to have finished my work in London. If I see it again, well: if not, I pray God to raise up others, that will be more faithful and more successful in his work."

On his birth-day this year, he makes the following observations. "I this day enter on my eighty-fifth year. And what cause have I to praise God, as for a thousand spiritual blessings, so for bodily blessings also! How little have I suffered yet, by the rush of numerous years! It is true, I am not so agile as I was in times past: I do not run or walk so fast as I did. My sight is a little decayed. My left eye is grown dim, and hardly serves me to read. I have daily some pain in the ball of my right eye, as also in my right temple (occasioned by a blow received some time since) and in my right shoulder and arm, which I impute partly to a sprain, and partly to the rheu-

matism. I find likewise some decay in my memory, with regard to names and things lately past: but not at all with regard to what I have read or heard, twenty, forty, or sixty years ago. Neither do I find any decay in my hearing, smell, taste, or appetite (though I want but a third part of the food I once did,) nor do I feel any such thing as weariness, either in travelling or preaching. And I am not conscious of any decay in writing sermons, which I do as readily, and I believe, as correctly as ever.

"To what can I impute this, that I am as I am? First, doubtless, to the power of God, fitting me for the work to which I am called, as long as he pleases to continue me therein: and next, subordinately to this, to the prayers of his children—May we not impute it, as inferior means, 1. To my constant exercise and change of air? 2. To my never having lost a night's sleep, sick or well, at land or sea, since I was born? 3. To my having sleep at command, so that whenever I feel myself almost wore out, I call it, and it comes day or night? 4. To my having constantly, for about sixty years, risen at four in the morning? 5. To my constant preaching at five in the morning, for above fifty years? 6. To my having had so little pain in my life, and so little sorrow or anxious care?—Even now, though I find pain daily in my eye, temple, or arm, yet it is never violent, and seldom lasts many minutes at a time.

"Whether or not this is sent to give me warning, that I am shortly to quit this tabernacle, I do not know: but be it one way or the other, I have only to say,

My remnant of days
I spend to his praise,
Who died the whole world to redeem:
Be they many or few,
My days are his due,
And they all are devoted to Him!"

December 31, 1788, Mr. Wesley makes the following remarks. "A numerous company concluded the old year with a very solemn watch-night. Hitherto God hath helped us: and we neither see nor feel any of those terrible judgments, which it was said, God would pour out upon the nation, about the conclusion of the year—For near seventy years I have observed, that before any war or public calamity England abounds with prophets, who confidently foretell many terrible things. They generally believe themselves; but are carried away with a vain imagination. And they are seldom undeceived even by the failure of their predictions, but still believe they will be fulfilled some time or other."

January 1, 1789. He says, "If this is to be the last year of my life, according to some of those prophecies, I hope it will be the best. I am not careful about it, but heartily receive the advice of the Angel in Milton, 'How well is thine; how long permit to Heaven."

Notwithstanding his advanced age, and increasing infirmities, Mr. Wesley this year visited Ireland; and travelled through various parts of that kingdom, preaching and meeting the societies as usual.

The following paper is without date; and though I suppose it was written a few years before this period, yet I shall here insert it, omitting an observation or two on the Hutchinsonian philosophy.

"To the Reverend Dean D——.

"Rev. Sir,

"When Dr. Bentley published his Greek Testament one remarked, 'Pity but he would publish the Old: then we should have two New Testaments.'—It is done: those who receive Mr. Hutchinson's emendations, certainly have two New Testaments! But I stumble at the threshold. Can we believe, that God left his whole Church so ignorant of the Scripture till yesterday? And if He was pleased to reveal the sense of it *now*, to whom may we suppose He would reveal it? 'All Scripture,' says Kempis, 'must be understood by the same spirit whereby it was written.' And a greater than he says, 'Them that are *meek* will He guide in judgment, and them that are gentle will He learn his way.' But was Mr. H—— eminently meek and gentle!

"However, in order to learn all I could from his works, after first consulting them, I carefully read over Mr. Spearman, Mr. Jones' ingenious book, and the Glasgow Abridgment. I read the last with Mr. Thomas Walsh,* the best Hebræan I ever knew. I never asked him the meaning of an Hebrew word, but he would immediately tell me, how often it occurred in the Bible, and what it meant in each place! We then both observed, that Mr. Hutchinson's whole scheme is built upon etymologies: the most uncertain foundation in the world, and the least to be depended upon: we observed, secondly, that if the points be allowed, all his building sinks at once: and thirdly, that setting them aside, many of his etymologies are forced, and unnatural. He frequently, to find the etymology of one word, squeezes two *radices* together: a liberty never to be taken, where a word may fairly be derived from a single *radix*.

"But may I hazard a few words on the points. Mr. H—— affirms, they were invented by the Masorites,† only thirteen or fourteen hun-

* Mr. Thomas Walsh was one of the lay-preachers: an itinerant.

† Masora, is a term in the Jewish theology, signifying a work on the Bible; performed by several learned Rabbins, to secure it from any alterations which might otherwise happen. In order to this, the Jews had recourse to a canon, which they judged infallible; which was, tradition. Accordingly they say, that when God gave the Law to Moses, he taught him first, the true reading of it; and secondly, its true interpretation; and that both these were handed down by oral tradition, from generation to generation, till at length they were committed to writing. The former of these, that is, the true reading, is the subject of the Masora; the latter, or true interpretation, that of the Mishna and Gemara.

According to Elias Levita, the authors of the Masora were the Jews of a famous school at Tiberias, about five hundred years after Christ, who composed, or at least began the Masora; whence they are called Masorites and Masoretic Doctors. Aben Ezra makes

dred years ago, in order to destroy the sense of Scripture. I doubt this; who can prove it? Who can prove they were not as old as Ezra; if not co-eval with the language? Let any one give a fair reading, only to what Dr. Cornelius Bayley has offered, in the preface to his Hebrew Grammar, and he will be as sick of reading without points, as I am; at least, till he can answer the doctor's arguments, he will not be so positive upon the question.

"As to his Theology, I first stumble at his profuse encomiums on the Hebrew language. But is it not the language which God himself used? And is not Greek too, the language which God himself used? And did He not use it in delivering to man a far more perfect dispensation than that He delivered in Hebrew? Who can deny it? And does not even this consideration give us reason at least to suspect, that the Greek language is as far superior to the Hebrew, as the New Testament is to the Old? And indeed, if we set prejudice aside, and consider both, with attention and candor, can we help seeing, that the Greek excels the Hebrew, as much in beauty and strength, as it does in copiousness? I suppose no one from the beginning of the world wrote better Hebrew than Moses. But does not the language of St. Paul excel the language of Moses, as much as the knowledge of St. Paul excelled his.

"I speak this, even on supposition that you read the Hebrew, as I believe Ezra, if not Moses did, with points. For if we read it in the modern way without points, I appeal to every competent judge, whether it be not the most equivocal."—The rest I have not been able to find."

About this time, one or two of the preachers, and a few societies, were harassed by justices of the peace, under a pretence entirely new.

The Methodists were told, "You profess yourselves members of the Church of England; therefore your licenses are good for nothing; nor can you as members of the church receive any benefit from the Act of Toleration." Mr. Wesley saw, that if the proceedings on this subtle distinction were extended over the nation, the Methodists must either profess themselves Dissenters, or suffer infinite trouble. Notwithstanding his ordinations, he has borne ample testimony, that he did not wish the people to alter their relative situation to the national

them the authors of the accents and points which serve for vowels in the Hebrew text, as we now find it.

The age of the Masorites has been much disputed. Archbishop Usher places them before Jerom; Capel, at the end of the fifth century; father Morin, in the tenth century. Basnage says, that they were not a society, but a succession of men. It is urged that there were Masorites from the time of Ezra and the men of the great Synagogue, to about the year of Christ 1030; and that Ben Asher, and Ben Naphtali, who were the best of the profession, and who, according to Basnage, were the inventors of the Masora, flourished at this time. Each of these published a copy of the Hebrew text, as correct, says Dr. Prideaux, as they could make it. The Eastern Jews have followed that of Ben Naphtali, and the Western, that of Ben Asher; and all that has been done since is to copy after them, without making any more corrections, or Masoretical criticisms.

church, &c. and yet he wished them to be effectually relieved from this embarrassment. He stated the case to a member of parliament, a real friend to liberty, hoping the legislature might be prevailed upon to interpose, and free the Methodists from the penalties of the Conventicle Act. There is not much reason to doubt but this privilege would have been obtained, with a little perseverance, had not the new arrangements in the economy of Methodism so manifestly tended to draw the whole body of preachers and people into a new and powerful party in the nation, the consequences of which appear to many of a very doubtful complexion. Mr. Wesley states the case thus—"Last month a few poor people met together in Lincolnshire, to pray, and to praise God, in a friend's house: there was no preaching at all. Two neighboring justices fined the man of the house twenty pounds. I suppose he was not worth twenty shillings.—Upon this, his household goods were distrained and sold to pay the fine. He appealed to the Quarter-Sessions: but all the justices averred, 'The Methodists could have no relief from the Act of Toleration, because they went to church; and that so long as they did so, the Conventicle Act should be executed upon them.'

"Last Sunday, when one of our preachers was beginning to speak to a quiet congregation, a neighboring justice sent a constable to seize him, though he was licensed; and would not release him till he had paid twenty pounds—telling him, his license was good for nothing, 'because he was a Churchman.'

"Now, sir, what can the Methodists do? They are liable to be ruined by the Conventicle Act, and they have no relief from the Act of Toleration! If this is not oppression, what is? Where then is English liberty? The liberty of Christians, yea of every rational creature? who as such, has a right to worship God according to his own conscience. But waving the question of right and wrong, what prudence is there in oppressing such a body of loyal subjects? If these good magistrates could drive them, not only out of Somersetshire, but out of England, who would be gainers thereby? Not his Majesty, whom we honor and love; not his ministers, whom we love and serve for his sake. Do they wish to throw away so many thousand friends? who are now bound to them by stronger ties than that of interest—If you will speak a word to Mr. Pitt on that head, you will oblige," &c.

The paper from which the above is taken, is only a copy: and I have some doubt, whether Somersetshire be not inserted for Lincolnshire before mentioned in the same paper. However this may be, Mr. Wesley wrote to the bishop of ——— the following letter a few months before the above was written.

"My Lord,

"I am a dying man, having already one foot in the grave. Humanly speaking, I cannot long creep upon the earth, being now nearer

ninety than eighty years of age. But I cannot die in peace, before I have discharged this office of christian love to your lordship. I write without ceremony, as neither hoping nor fearing any thing from your lordship, or from any man living. And I ask, in the name and in the presence of him, to whom both you and I are shortly to give an account, why do you trouble those that are quiet in the land? Those that fear God and work righteousness? Does your lordship know what the Methodists are? That many thousands of them are zealous members of the Church of England? and strongly attached, not only to his Majesty, but to his present ministry? Why should your lordship, setting religion out of the question, throw away such a body of respectable friends? Is it for their religious sentiments? Alas my lord, is this a time to persecute any man for conscience-sake? I beseech you, my lord, do as you would be done to. You are a man of sense: you are a man of learning: nay, I verily believe (what is of infinitely more value) you are a man of piety. Then think, and let think—I pray God to bless you with the choicest of his blessings—

I am, my lord," &c.

To another bishop, who, I suppose, had forbidden his clergy to let Mr. Wesley preach in their churches, he wrote in his own laconic way as follows:

"My Lord,

"Several years ago, the church-wardens of St. Bartholomew's informed Dr. Gibson, then Lord Bishop of London, 'My Lord, Mr. Bateman, our Rector, invites Mr. Wesley very frequently to preach in his church.' The bishop replied, 'And what would you have me do? I have no right to hinder him. Mr. Wesley is a clergyman regularly ordained, and under no ecclesiastical censure.'

I am, my lord,

Your lordship's obedient servant,

John Wesley."

Mr. Wesley began now to feel the infirmities of age increase fast upon him, though he continued his usual labors without complaint. But in January, 1790, he observes, "I am now an old man, decayed from head to foot. My eyes are dim: my right hand shakes much: my mouth is hot and dry every morning: I have a lingering fever almost every day: and my motion is weak and slow. However, blessed be God, I do not slack my labor. I can preach and write still." And on June 28, his birth-day, he further observes, "This day I enter into my eighty-eighth year. For above eighty-six years, I found none of the infirmities of old age: my eyes did not wax dim, neither was my natural strength abated. But last August, I found almost a sudden change; my eyes were so dim, that no glasses would help me: my strength likewise quite forsook me, and probably will

not return in this world. But I feel no pain from head to foot, only it seems nature is exhausted, and humanly speaking, will sink more and more, till,

"The weary springs of life stand still at last."

This, at length, was literally the case; the death of Mr. Wesley, like that of his brother Charles, being one of those rare instances in which nature, drooping under the load of years, sinks by a gentle decay. For several years preceding his death, this decay was, perhaps, more visible to others than to himself; particularly by a more frequent disposition to sleep during the day; by a growing defect in memory, a faculty he once possessed in a high degree of perfection; and by a general diminution of the vigor and agility he had so long enjoyed. His labors, however, suffered little interruption: and when the summons came, it found him, as he always wished it should, in the harness, still occupied in his Master's work!

Thursday, the 17th of February, 1791, Mr. Wesley preached at Lambeth: but on his return home, seemed much indisposed, and supposed he had taken cold.—The next day, he read and wrote as usual; and in the evening preached at Chelsea with some difficulty, having a high degree of fever. Saturday he still persevered in his usual employments, though to those about him, his complaints seemed evidently increasing. He dined at Islington, and desired a friend to read to him from the fourth to the seventh chapter of Job, inclusive. On Sunday he rose early, according to custom, but quite unfit for the exercises of the day. He was obliged to lie down about seven o'clock in the morning, and slept several hours. In the course of the day, two of his own discourses on the Sermon on the mount, were read to him; and in the evening he came down to supper. Monday, the 21st, he seemed much better, and visited a friend at Twickenham. Tuesday, he went on with his usual work, preached at the City-Road, and seemed better than he had been for some days. Wednesday he went to Leatherhead, where he delivered his last sermon, from "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near." Thursday he paid a visit to Mr. Wolff's lovely family at Balaam, from whence he returned, on Friday the 25th, extremely ill. His friends were struck with the manner of his getting out of the carriage, and still more when he went up stairs, and sat down in his chair. He sent every one out of the room, and desired not to be interrupted for half an hour. When that time was expired, some mulled wine was brought him, of which he drank a little. In a few minutes he threw it up, and said, "I must lie down." His friends were now alarmed, and I was immediately sent for, to visit him. On entering the room, he said in a cheerful voice, "Doctor, they are more afraid than hurt." Most of this day he lay in bed, had a quick pulse, with a considerable degree of fever and stu-

por. Saturday, the 26th, he continued much in the same state; taking very little, either of medicine or nourishment. Sunday morning, he seemed better, got up, and took a cup of tea. Sitting in his chair, he looked quite cheerful, and repeated these words of his brother Charles,

"Till glad I lay this body down,
Thy servant, Lord, attend;
And O! my life of mercy crown
With a triumphant end!"

Soon after he emphatically said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." Exerting himself to converse with some friends, he was soon fatigued, and obliged to lie down. After lying some time quiet, he looked up, and said, "Speak to me, I cannot speak." The persons present kneeled down to pray with him, and his hearty Amen, showed he was perfectly sensible of what was said. Some time after he said, "There is no need of more; when at Bristol my words were,

"I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me." *

Monday, the 28th, his weakness increased. He slept most of the day, and spoke but little; yet that little testified how much his whole heart was taken up in the care of the societies, the glory of God, and the promotion of the things pertaining to that kingdom, to which he was hastening. Once he said, in a low but distinct manner, "There is no way into the holiest, but by the blood of Jesus." He asked what the words were, from which he had preached a little before at Hampstead. Being told they were these; "Brethren, ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though he was rich, yet for your sakes became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich," he replied, "That is the foundation, the only foundation, and there is no other."—This day I desired he might be asked, if he would have any other physician called in to attend him? but this he absolutely refused.—It is remarkable, that he suffered so little pain, never complaining of any during his illness, but once of a pain in his breast. This was a restless night—Tuesday morning, he sang two verses of an hymn: then lying still, as if to recover strength, he called for pen and ink; but when it was brought he could not write. A

* At the Bristol Conference, in 1783, Mr. Wesley was taken very ill: neither he, nor his friends thought he could recover. From the nature of his complaint, he supposed a spasm would seize his stomach and probably occasion sudden death. Under these views of his situation, he said to Mr. Bradford, "I have been reflecting on my past life: I have been wandering up and down, between fifty and sixty years, endeavoring in my poor way, to do a little good to my fellow creatures: and now it is probable, that there are but a few steps between me and death; and what have I to trust to for salvation? I can see nothing which I have done or suffered, that will bear looking at. I have no other plea than this: 'I the chief of sinners am, but Jesus died for me.'" The sentiment here expressed, and his reference to it in his last sickness, plainly shows how steadily he had persevered in the same views of the gospel, with which he set out to preach it.

person said, "Let me write for you, sir: tell me what you would say." He replied, "Nothing, but that God is with us." In the forenoon, he said, "I will get up." While they were preparing his clothes, he broke out, in a manner that astonished all who were about him, in singing,

"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers:
My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
While life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures!"

Having got him into his chair, they observed him change for death. But he, regardless of his dying body, said with a weak voice, "Lord, Thou givest strength to those who can speak, and to those who cannot. Speak, Lord, to all our hearts, and let them know that Thou loosest tongues." He then sung,

"To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Who sweetly all agree"—

Here his voice failed. After gasping for breath he said, "Now we have done all" He was then laid on the bed, from whence he rose no more. After resting a little, he called to those who were with him, "to pray and praise." Soon after he said, "Let me be buried in nothing but what is woollen, and let my corpse be carried in my coffin, into the chapel." And again called upon them to "pray and praise," and taking each by the hand, and affectionately saluting them, bade them farewell. Attempting afterwards to say something which they could not understand, he paused a little, and then with all the remaining strength he had, said, "The best of all is, God is with us." And again, lifting his hand, he repeated the same words in a holy triumph, "The best of all is, God is with us." Something being given him to moisten his lips, he said, "It will not do; we must take the consequence. Never mind the poor carcase." Being told that his brother's widow was come, he said, "He giveth his servants rest;" thanked her as she pressed his hand, and affectionately endeavored to kiss her. His lips being again wet, he repeated his usual grace after a meal; "We thank Thee, O Lord, for these and all thy mercies: bless the church and king, grant us truth and peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord." After some pause, he said, "The clouds drop fatness. The Lord is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." He again called them to prayer, and appeared fervently to join in their petitions.

Most of the following night, he often attempted to repeat the psalm before mentioned; but could only get out, "I'll praise, I'll praise." On Wednesday morning, his end drew near. Mr. Bradford, his old and faithful friend, who, with the affection of a son, had attended him for many years, now prayed with him; and the last word he

was heard to articulate was "Farewell." — A few minutes before ten, on the second day of March, while a number of friends were kneeling around his bed, died Mr. John Wesley, without a groan. He was in the eighty-eighth year of his age, had been sixty-five years in the ministry; and the preceding pages will be a lasting memorial of his uncommon zeal, diligence, and usefulness in his Master's work, for more than half a century.—His death was an admirable close of so laborious and useful a life.

March the 9th, was the day appointed for his interment. The preachers then in London, to my utter astonishment, insisted that I should deliver the funeral discourse: and the executors afterwards approved of the appointment. The intention was, to carry the corpse into the chapel, and place it in a raised situation before the pulpit during the service. But the crowds which came to see the body while it lay in the coffin, both in the private house, and especially in the chapel the day before the funeral, were so great, that his friends were apprehensive of a tumult, if they should proceed on the plan first intended. It was therefore resolved, the evening before, to bury him between five and six in the morning. Though the time of notice to his friends was short, and the design itself was spoken of with great caution, yet a considerable number of persons attended at that early hour. The late Rev. Mr. Richardson, who now lies with him in the same vault, read the funeral service in a manner that made it peculiarly affecting. The discourse, which was afterwards printed, was delivered in the chapel at the hour appointed in the forenoon, to an astonishing multitude of people; among whom were many ministers of the gospel, both of the establishment, and the Dissenters. The audience was still and solemn as night; and all seemed to carry away with them, enlarged views of Mr. Wesley's character, and serious impressions of the importance of religion, and the utility of Methodism.

The death of Mr. Wesley, attracted the public notice beyond any former example, perhaps, of a clergyman however dignified. It being generally known, that he died as he had lived; and evinced in death, the uprightness and integrity of his life, the impression on the public mind in favor of his character and of Methodism, was almost universal; so that some persons said, Mr. Wesley will do more good by his death than he did in his whole life. This, however, is certain, that a door of usefulness was now opened to the Methodist preachers, unknown at any former period. And had they strictly adhered to the old *disinterested* plan of Methodism, it is probable they would in the end, have been more extensively useful to the whole nation. But this opportunity is past, and will never return.

The following inscription, though in my judgment not worthy of Mr. Wesley, has since his interment been put on his tomb.

"To the Memory of
THE VENERABLE JOHN WESLEY, A. M.
Late Fellow of LINCOLN College, OXFORD.

This GREAT LIGHT arose
(By the singular Providence of God)
To enlighten THESE NATIONS,
And to *revive*, *enforce*, and *defend*,
The Pure, Apostolical DOCTRINES and PRACTICES of
THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH:
Which he continued to do, by his WRITINGS and his
LABORS,
For more than HALF A CENTURY:
And, to his inexpressible Joy,
Not only, beheld their INFLUENCE extending,
And their EFFICACY witnessed,
In the Hearts and Lives of MANY THOUSANDS,
As well in the WESTERN WORLD, as in these
KINGDOMS:
But also, far above all human Power or Expectation,
Lived to see PROVISION made, by the singular Grace
of GOD,
For their CONTINUANCE and ESTABLISHMENT,
TO THE JOY of FUTURE GENERATIONS!
READER, If thou art constrained to bless the INSTRUMENT,
GIVE GOD THE GLORY!

After having languished a few days, He at length finished his COURSE *and his* LIFE *together: gloriously triumphing over* DEATH, *March* 2, *An. Dom.* 1791, *in the eighty-eighth Year of his Age.*"

A copy of the late Mr. John Wesley's Will.

"In the name of God. Amen!

"I JOHN WESLEY, Clerk, some time Fellow of Lincoln-College, Oxford, revoking all others, appoint this to be my last Will and Testament.

"I give all my books now on sale, and the copies of them (only subject to a rent charge of £85 a year to the widow and children of my brother) to my faithful friends, John Horton, merchant, George Wolff, merchant, and William Marriott, stock-broker, all of London, in trust for the general fund of the Methodist Conference in carrying on the work of God, by itinerant preachers, on condition that they permit the following committee, Thomas Coke, James Creighton,

Peard Dickenson, Thomas Rankin, George Whitefield, and the London Assistant for the time being, still to superintend the printing-press, and to employ Hannah Paramore and George Paramore, as heretofore, unless four of the committee judge a change to be needful.

"I give the books, furniture, and whatever else belongs to me in the three houses at Kingswood, in trust to Thomas Coke, Alexander Mather, and Henry Moore, to be still employed in teaching and maintaining the children of poor travelling preachers.

"I give to Thomas Coke, Doctor John Whitehead, and Henry Moore, all the books which are in my study and bed-chamber at London, and in my studies elsewhere, in trust for the use of the preachers who shall labor here from time to time.

"I give the coins, and whatever else is found in the drawer of my bureau at London, to my dear grand-daughters Mary and Jane Smith.

"I give all my manuscripts to Thomas Coke, Doctor Whitehead, and Henry Moore, to be burnt or published as they see good.

"I give whatever money remains in my bureau and pockets at my decease to be equally divided between Thomas Briscoe, William Collins, John Easton, and Isaac Brown.

"I desire my gowns, cassocks, sashes, and bands, may remain at the chapel for the use of the clergymen attending there.

"I desire the London Assistant for the time being to divide the rest of my wearing apparel between those four of the travelling preachers that want it most; only my pelisse I give to the Rev. Mr. Creighton; my watch to my friend Joseph Bradford; my gold seal to Elizabeth Ritchie.

"I give my chaise and horses to James Ward and Charles Wheeler, in trust, to be sold, and the money to be divided, one half to Hannah Abbott, and the other to the poor members of the Select society.

"Out of the first money which arises from the sale of books, I bequeath to my dear sister Martha Hall (if alive) £40, to Mr. Creighton aforesaid £40, and to the Rev. Mr. Heath £60.

"And whereas I am empowered by a late Deed to name the persons who are to preach in the New Chapel at London (the clergymen for a continuance,) and by another Deed to name a committee for appointing preachers in the New Chapel at Bath, I do hereby appoint John Richardson, Thomas Coke, James Creighton, Peard Dickenson, clerks, Alexander Mather, William Thompson, Henry Moore, Andrew Blair, John Valton, Joseph Bradford, James Rogers, and William Myles, to preach in the New Chapel at London, and to be the committee for appointing preachers in the New Chapel at Bath.

"I likewise appoint Henry Brooke, painter, Arthur Keen, gent. and William Whitestone, stationer, all of Dublin, to receive the annuity of £5, (English,) left to Kingswood School by the late Roger Shiel, Esq.

"I give £6, to be divided among the six poor men, named by the,

Assistant, who shall carry my body to the grave; for I particularly desire there may be no hearse, no coach, no escutcheon, no pomp, except the tears of them that loved me, and are following me to Abraham's bosom. I solemnly adjure my executors in the name of God, punctually to observe this.

"Lastly, I give to each of those travelling preachers who shall remain in the connexion six months after my decease, as a little token of my love, the eight volumes of Sermons.

"I appoint John Horton, George Wolff, and William Marriott, aforesaid, to be Executors of this my last Will and Testament, for which trouble they will receive no recompense till the resurrection of the just.

"Witness my hand and seal the 20th day of February, 1789.

JOHN WESLEY. (Seal.)

"Signed, sealed, and delivered, by the said Testator as and for his last Will and Testament, in the presence of us,

WILLIAM CLULOW.
ELIZABETH CLULOW.

"Should there be any part of my personal estate undisposed of by this my last Will: I give the same unto my two nieces E. Ellison, and S. Collet, equally.

JOHN WESLEY.
WILLIAM CLULOW.
Feb. 25, 1789. ELIZABETH CLULOW.

"I give my Types, Printing-presses, and everything pertaining thereto, to Mr. Thomas Rankin, and Mr. George Whitefield, in trust for the use of the Conference.

JOHN WESLEY."

In the latter end of the summer preceding Mr. Wesley's death a certain person, who had long been trying various schemes to acquire a superior influence over both preachers and people, endeavored to persuade Mr. Wesley, that if he disposed of his literary property by his Will only, his next of kin would claim it; that a deed of assignment was necessary to prevent their claims. Mr. Wesley denied that this would be the case, and resisted the proposition of making a deed of assignment. Being however, frequently, worried on the occasion, he at length, in company with this same person, applied to his confidential solicitor on the question; who told them, that as his literary property was personal estate, his Will was a competent instrument to convey it, and that no deed of assignment was necessary. The party who wished for a deed of assignment that might answer his purpose, was not discouraged by this repulse, but afterwards wrote to the same solicitor for his further opinion on the subject; and received the same answer in writing. Finding Mr. Wesley's solicitor not of an accommodating disposition where integrity must be sacri-

ficed, he applied to another, a total stranger to the Methodist economy, and therefore more under his direction. A deed of assignment was drawn up, to answer the purpose intended, conveying Mr. Wesley's literary property to seven persons therein named (among whom the executors of Mr. Wesley's Will were not included) upon special trust, that they should apply all the profits of the books, &c. to the sole use and benefit of the Conference, in such manner as to *them* should seem most proper and expedient. Things being thus prepared, the old gentleman was carried privately to a friend's house, to execute this deed, five months before he died; a time when his weakness was so great, that we may venture to say, he could not sit five minutes to hear any thing read, especially in the forms of law, without falling into a doze: so that there is not the least probability that Mr. Wesley knew the contents of the deed he executed, or had any suspicion of its tendency or the design of its author. It is very certain the body of the preachers were ignorant of this scandalous transaction; in which an advantage was taken of age and infirmities, by one or two individuals, to gain the management of a large and increasing annual revenue, to serve the purposes of their own influence and ambition. I mention one or two individuals, because it has been said, that one of the preachers named in this deed, was in league with him who ought to be considered as the author of it. But I say no more on a subject that will not bear to be fully examined.

CHAPTER VI.

SECTION I.

A REVIEW OF MR. WESLEY'S CHARACTER.

Many particulars of Mr. Wesley's life, both of a public and private nature, have already been detailed; and I hope in such a manner as to enable the intelligent reader, by this time, to form an opinion of his character upon good evidence. But we must remember that some particular circumstances, or a few occasional acts in a man's life, do not form his character, but the general tenor of his conduct. Because this shows some fixed principle that uniformly operates upon him, which, with a correspondent practice, forms his character. And when a long, virtuous, and useful life, is crowned with an end suitable to it, death puts a stamp upon his virtues, which shows us they are not counterfeit, but genuine. If the candid reader will review Mr. Wesley's whole life, and judge of him by this rule, I am persuaded he

will think with me, that, whatever failings as a man he might have, he had a degree of excellence in his character to which few men have attained.

But, to complete the picture which I have attempted to draw, it is necessary that some features in it should be more strongly marked. Some persons have affected to insinuate that Mr. Wesley was a man of slender capacity; but certainly with great injustice. His apprehension was clear, his penetration quick, and his judgment discriminative and sound: of which his controversial writings, and his celebrity in the office he held at Oxford, when young, are sufficient proofs. In governing a large body of preachers and people, of various habits, interests, and principles, with astonishing calmness and regularity for many years; he showed a strong capacious mind, that could comprehend and combine together a vast variety of circumstances, and direct their influence through the great body he governed. As a scholar, he certainly held a conspicuous rank. He was a critic in the Latin and Greek classics; and was well acquainted with the Hebrew, as well as with most of the European languages now in use. But the Greek was his favorite language, in which his knowledge was extensive and accurate. At College, he had studied with a good deal of care, Euclid, Keil, Sir Isaac Newton's Optics, &c. &c. but he never entered far into the more abstruse parts, or the higher branches of the mathematics; finding they would fascinate his mind, absorb all his attention, and divert him from the pursuit of the more important objects of his own profession. He was no great friend to metaphysical disquisitions: and I must own, that I always thought he held metaphysical reasoning, even when properly and modestly conducted, in too low estimation. But this, I apprehend, proceeded chiefly from the incompetency of most of those who have entered upon these kinds of speculations, and the mischief which he observed their writings had done, both in the affairs of civil life, and also in religion. He was a most determined opposer of those systems of natural philosophy, which represent the powers of matter as the efficient causes of all the phenomena of nature; whereby God is banished out of the world, and all things, even the actions of men, are supposed to be determined by laws unalterably fixed, no place being left for the interpositions of superintending providence. He doubted, but did not deny, the truth of the calculations of the planetary distances, and some other parts of modern Astronomy. Natural history was a field in which he walked at every opportunity, and contemplated with infinite pleasure, the wisdom, the power, and goodness of God, in the structure of natural bodies, and in the various instincts and habits of the animal creation. But he was obliged to view these wonderful works of God, in the labors and records of others; his various and continual employments of a higher nature, not permitting him to make experiments and observations for himself.

"As a writer, he certainly possessed talents, both from nature and education, sufficient to procure him considerable reputation." But Mr. Wesley did not write for fame; his object was to instruct and benefit that numerous class of people, who have a plain understanding, with plain common sense, little learning, little money, and but little time to spare for reading. In all his writings he constantly kept these circumstances in view. Content with doing good, he used no trappings merely to please, or to gain applause. The distinguishing character of his style is, brevity and perspicuity. He never lost sight of the rule which Horace gives,

Est brevitate opus, ut currat sententia, neu se
Impediat verbis lassas onerantibus aures.

"Concise your diction, let your sense be clear,
Nor with a weight of words fatigue the ear."

In many of his works we may observe, his words are well chosen, being *pure*, *proper* to his subject, and *precise* in their meaning. His sentences commonly have clearness, unity, and strength: yet he sometimes closes a sentence in a manner which destroys its harmony, and subtracts much from its beauty. But whenever he took time, and gave the necessary attention to his subject, both his manner of treating it, and his style, show the hand of a master.

The following is a just character of Mr. Wesley as a preacher. "His attitude in the pulpit was graceful and easy; his action calm and natural, yet pleasing and expressive: his voice not loud, but clear and manly; his style neat, simple, and perspicuous; and admirably adapted to the capacity of his hearers. His discourses, in point of composition, were extremely different on different occasions. When he gave himself sufficient time for study, he succeeded; but when he did not, he frequently failed."—It was indeed manifest to his friends for many years before he died, that his employments were too many, and he preached too often, to appear with the same advantage at all times in the pulpit. His sermons were always short: he was seldom more than half an hour in delivering a discourse, sometimes not so long. His subjects were judiciously chosen; instructive and interesting to the audience, and well adapted to gain attention and warm the heart.

The travels of Mr. Wesley in the work of the ministry, for fifty years together, are, I apprehend, without precedent. During this period, he travelled about four thousand five hundred miles every year, one year with another; which give two hundred and twenty-five thousand miles, that he travelled after he became an itinerant preacher! It had been impossible for him to perform this almost incredible degree of labor, without great punctuality and care in the management of his time. He had stated hours for every purpose: and his only relaxation was a change of employment. His rules

were like the laws of the Medes and Persians, absolute and irrevocable. He had a peculiar pleasure in reading and study; and every literary man knows the force of this passion, how apt it is to make him encroach on the time which ought to be employed in other duties: he had a high relish for polite conversation, especially with pious, learned, and sensible men; but whenever the hour came he was to set out on a journey, he instantly quitted any subject or any company in which he might be engaged, without any apparent reluctance.—For fifty-two years, or upwards, he generally delivered two, frequently three or four sermons in a day. But calculating at two sermons a day, and allowing, as a writer of his life has done, fifty annually for extraordinary occasions, the whole number during this period will be, forty thousand five hundred and sixty. To these may be added, as the same writer justly observes, an infinite number of exhortations to the societies after preaching, and in other occasional meetings at which he assisted.

"In social life, Mr. Wesley was lively and conversible." He had most exquisite talents to make himself agreeable in company: and having been much accustomed to society, the rules of good breeding were habitual to him. The abstraction of a scholar did not appear in his behavior; he was attentive and polite. He spoke a good deal where he saw it was expected, which was almost always the case wherever he visited: his invitations to the best families being generally given to show him respect, and hear him converse on the different subjects proposed. Having seen much of the world in his travels, and read more, his mind was well stored with an infinite number of anecdotes and observations; and the manner in which he related them, was no inconsiderable addition to the entertainment they afforded.—And in private life among his friends, his manner was equally sprightly and pleasant. It was impossible to be long in his company, either in public or private, without partaking of his placid cheerfulness; which was not abated by the infirmities of age, or the approach of death; but was as conspicuous at fourscore and seven, as at one and twenty.

This part of Mr. Wesley's character is genuine, being drawn from a view of his life and manners. But how different from an observation made upon him, by Dr. Thomas Herring, Archbishop of Canterbury; in a letter dated January, 1756.* The archbishop says, "Whitefield is Daniel Burges *redivivus;* and to be sure, he finds his account in his joco-serious addresses. The other author (Mr. John Wesley) in my opinion, with good parts and more learning, is a most dark and *saturnine* creature." As it is evident the archbishop knew nothing of either of these gentlemen, but by the report of those as ignorant of them as himself, or from some uncertain conjecture, this censure shows great want of liberality; and the editor of these letters

* See the Archbishop's letters to William Duncombe, Esq. printed in 1777, page 171.

would have done more credit to his friend's memory if he had suppressed it.

The late celebrated Dr. Johnson, was remarkably fond of sprightly, rational, polite conversation. And, I apprehend, there was no better judge in England of a man's talents in this way, than the Doctor.—He was personally acquainted with Mr. Wesley, and his judgment of Mr. Wesley's manner of conversation is left on record. He said, "Mr. Wesley's conversation is good; he talks well on any subject; I could converse with him all night." But Dr. Johnson, would certainly not have expressed himself in this strong language of approbation, had Mr. Wesley been that *dark, saturnine* creature, represented by Archbishop Herring.

"A remarkable feature in Mr. Wesley's character, was his placability." Having an active penetrating mind, his temper was naturally quick, and even tending to sharpness. The influence of religion, and the constant habit of close thinking, had in a great measure corrected this disposition. "In general he preserved an air of sedateness and tranquillity, which formed a striking contrast to the liveliness conspicuous in all his actions." Persecution, abuse, or injury, he bore from strangers, not only without anger, but without any apparent emotion. But in contests of another kind, this was not the case. Opposition from his preachers, or people, he could not so easily brook; and on some of these occasions he would speak with a degree of warmth which cannot be defended. But this was only for a moment; and he was very sensible of the impropriety of it. What he said of himself was strictly true: that he had a great facility in forgiving injuries.—Submission on the part of the offender, presently disarmed his resentment, and he would treat him with great kindness and cordiality."—No man was ever more free from jealousy or suspicion than Mr. Wesley, or laid himself more open to the impositions of others. Though his confidence was often abused, and circumstances sometimes took place, which would have made almost any other man suspect every body about him, yet he suspected no one; nor was it easy to convince him, that any one had intentionally deceived him. And when facts had demonstrated that this was actually the case, he would allow no more, than that it was so in that single instance. And if the person acknowledged his fault, he believed him sincere, and would trust him again. If we view this temper of his mind in connexion with a circumstance before mentioned, that his most private concerns lay open to the inspection of those constantly about him, it will afford as strong a proof as can well be given, of the integrity of his own mind; and that he was at the furthest distance from any intention to deceive, or impose upon others.

"The temperance of Mr. Wesley was extraordinary." When at college he carried it so far, that his friends thought him blamable. But he never imposed upon others, the same degree of rigor he ex-

ercised upon himself. He only said, "I must be the best judge of what is hurtful, or beneficial to me." Among other things, he was remarkable in the article of sleep; and his notion of it cannot be better explained, than in his own words. "Healthy men," says he, "require above six hours sleep; healthy women, a little above seven, in four and twenty. If any one desires to know exactly what quantity of sleep his own constitution requires, he may very easily make the experiment, which I made about sixty years ago. I then waked every night about twelve or one, and lay awake for some time. I readily concluded, that this arose from my being in bed longer than nature required. To be satisfied, I procured an *alarum*, which waked me the next morning at seven (near an hour earlier than I rose the day before,) yet I lay awake again at night. The second morning I rose at six; but notwithstanding this, I lay awake the second night. The third morning I rose at five; but nevertheless I lay awake the third night. The fourth morning I rose at four, as, by the grace of God, I have done ever since: and I lay awake no more. And I do not now lie awake, taking the year round, a quarter of an hour together in a month. By the same experiment, rising earlier and earlier every morning, may any one find how much sleep he wants."

It must, however, be observed, that for many years before his death, Mr. Wesley slept more or less every day. And his great readiness to fall asleep at any time when fatigued, was a considerable means of keeping up his strength, and enabling him to go through so much labor. I have known him, near thirty years ago, come to the place where he had to preach at noon after a long wearisome ride in a hot day, and without any refreshment lie down and immediately fall fast asleep. After sleeping ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, he would get up refreshed and fit for his work. He never could endure to sleep on a soft bed. I have seen him at night, when he thought the bed too soft to sleep upon, lay himself across it, and roll two or three times backward and forward, till it was sufficiently flattened, and then get into it. Even in the latter part of life, when the infirmities of age pressed upon him, his whole conduct was at the greatest distance from softness or effeminacy.

A writer of Mr. Wesley's life, from whom some observations respecting his general character, have already been taken, has further observed, "Perhaps the most charitable man in England, was Mr. Wesley." His liberality to the poor, knew no bounds but an empty pocket. He gave away, not merely a certain part of his income, but all that he had: his own wants provided for, he devoted all the rest to the necessities of others. He entered upon this good work at a very early period. We are told, that, "When he had thirty pounds a year, he lived on twenty-eight, and gave away forty shillings. The next year, receiving sixty pounds, he still lived on twenty-eight, and gave away two and thirty. The third year he received ninety pounds,

and gave away sixty-two. The fourth year he received one hundred and twenty pounds. Still he lived on twenty-eight, and gave to the poor ninety-two." In this ratio he proceeded during the rest of his life; and in the course of fifty years, it has been supposed, he gave away between twenty and thirty thousand pounds; a great part of which, almost any other man than himself would have put out at interest, upon good security.

Mr. Wesley's charitable donations, were often misrepresented.—Envy will never want a pretext, to put the worst construction on the best and most generous actions. Some years ago, Erasmus, Bishop of Crete, visited London. It has been said, that his Episcopal character was authenticated by a letter from the Patriarch of Smyrna; who added, that the Turks had driven him from his see, for baptizing a Mussulman into the faith of Christ. That the known liberality of Mr. Wesley, should induce him to be kind to such a stranger in distress, is not to be wondered at; but the report circulated in some periodical publications of that time, that Mr. Charles Wesley had offered him forty guineas to consecrate his brother a bishop, is totally without foundation, and has not even the shadow of probability to give it credit.

In the distribution of his money, Mr. Wesley was as disinterested. as he was charitable. He had no regard to family connexions, nor even to the wants of the preachers who labored with him, in preference to strangers. He knew that these had some friends; and he thought the poor destitute stranger might have none, and therefore had the first claim on his liberality. When a trifling legacy has been paid him, he has been known to dispose of it in some charitable way before he slept, that it might not remain his own property for one night. "Every one knows the apostrophes in which he addressed the public, more than once, on this subject, declaring, that his own hands should be his executors." And though he gained all he could by his publications, and saved all he could, not wasting so much as a sheet of paper; yet by giving all he could, he was preserved from 'laying up treasures upon earth.' He had declared in print, that, if he died worth more than ten pounds, independent of his books, and the arrears of his fellowship, which he then held, he would give the world leave to call him, "a thief and a robber." This declaration, made in the integrity of his heart, and height of his zeal, laid him under some inconveniences afterwards, from circumstances which he could not at that time foresee. Yet in this, as all his friends expected, he literally kept his word, as far as human foresight could reach.—His chaise and horses, his clothes, and a few trifles of that kind, were all, his books excepted, that he left at his death. Whatever might be the value of his books, is of no consequence, as they were placed in the hands of trustees (though the trust has been violated) and the profits arising from the sale of them to be applied to the use and

benefit of the Conference; reserving only a few legacies which Mr. Wesley left, and a rent-charge of eighty-five pounds a year to be paid to his brother's widow; which was not a legacy but a debt, as a consideration for the copy-right of his brother's hymns.

Among the other excellences of Mr. Wesley, his moderation in controversy deserves to be noticed. Writers of controversy too often forget, that their own character is intimately connected with the manner in which they treat others: and if they have no regard for their opponents, they should have some for themselves. When a writer becomes personal and abusive, it affords a fair presumption against his arguments, and ought to put us on our guard against deception. Most of Mr. Wesley's opponents were of this description; their railing was much more violent, than their reasons were cogent. Mr. Wesley kept his temper, and wrote like a Christian, a gentleman, and a scholar. He might have taken the words of the excellent Hooker as a motto to his polemical tracts, "To your railing I say nothing, to your reasons I say what follows." He admired the temper in which Mr. Law wrote controversy: only in some instances Mr. Law shows a contempt for his opponent, which Mr. Wesley thought was highly improper.

During the time that Mr. Wesley strictly and properly speaking, governed the societies, his power was absolute. There were no rights, or privileges; no officers of power or influence; but what were created or sanctioned by him: nor could any persons hold them, but during his pleasure. The whole system of Methodism, like a great and complicated machine, was formed under his direction, and his will give motion to all its parts, and turned it this way or that, as he thought proper. His influence, like a mighty torrent, gathered strength in its progress, at every intermediate step between him and the great body of the people. Let us suppose, for instance, that on some important matter which concerned all the societies, or the nation at large, Mr. Wesley gave his orders to the assistants, dispersed through the three kingdoms: these would impress them on the other itinerants, in number together, let us suppose three hundred. With the influence of this body, these orders would pass on, to about twelve hundred local preachers in a vast variety of situations; who, in conjunction with the itinerants, would impress them on about four thousand stewards and class leaders; and these, by personal application, might, in a short time, enforce them on about seventy thousand individuals, members of the societies. In addition to this, we may suppose, the itinerant and local preachers in the course of ten days or a fortnight, publicly address between three and four hundred thousand people, when the same matter might be further urged upon them. Now, what could stand against such influence as this? so combined, diffusive, and rapid in its progress, when once put in motion? If directed against any individuals in the societies, whatever might be their

character or influence, their opposition could only be like pebbles before a torrent rolling down the side of a mountain; it would be swept away without being perceived.

I do not say, that Mr. Wesley ever exercised his authority on so extensive a scale, as here represented: all I mean to show the reader is, that, had any occasion of sufficient importance required it, he had the power of doing so: and that, in the Methodist economy, the influence of the ruling preachers operates in this way, and has actually been exerted since the death of Mr. Wesley, on a larger scale than here mentioned.

It is natural to suppose, that some persons would be offended with Mr. Wesley's power over the whole connexion; as thinking they had some right to share it with him. He has, accordingly, been charged with the love of power, even so far as to be a blemish in his character. But he always denied the charge. This however is certain, that he always considered his power, as inseparably connected with the unity and prosperity of the societies over which he presided: and, whether mistaken or not, it is probable, that on this account only he was so tenacious of it. This may certainly be said to his praise, that no man ever used his power with more moderation than Mr. Wesley. He never sought his own ease or advantage in the use of it: the societies labored under no inconvenience from it, but prospered under his government. They derived this benefit from his supreme power, that if any were injured or oppressed by the ignorance or rashness of a preacher, they obtained immediate redress by applying to him. Having known him for twenty-five years, and having examined his private papers, I have no hesitation in declaring, that I am fully convinced he used all his influence and power to the best of his judgment, on every occasion, to promote the interests of Christianity, the prosperity of the people he governed, and the peace and welfare of his country, disregarding any private concern, or attachment whatever, when it stood in the way of his general purpose of doing good.

Hitherto I have spoken of Mr. Wesley's power only in relation to his personal character. But I readily acknowledge, that his absolute unlimited power, has in its consequences, since his death, been a great injury to the societies. It has been the *parent* of a system of government, highly oppressive to many individuals, and much more injurious to the rights of the people, than his own. He constantly acted as a middle person, between the preachers and people; and was ready to protect the people, the poor as well as the rich, against any insult or oppression they might receive. At present, the preachers claim unlimited powers, both to make laws and execute them, by themselves or their deputies, without any intermediate authority existing, to act as a check in favor of the people. But what is still much worse than all the rest, is, that the present system of government

among the Methodists, requires such arts of human policy and chicanery to carry it on, as in my opinion, are totally inconsistent with the openness of gospel simplicity. It is happy that the great body of the preachers do not enter into the spirit of it, and indeed know little about it: being content with doing their duty on the circuits to which they are appointed, and promoting the spiritual welfare of the people. And the hope is, that this mode of government will soon be altered.

I shall finish this review of Mr. Wesley's character, with two or three sketches of it drawn up by different persons, and printed soon after his death; being persuaded they will be highly acceptable to the candid reader.

"Now that Mr. John Wesley has finished his course upon earth, I may be allowed to estimate his character, and the loss the world has sustained by his death. Upon a fair account, it appears to be such, as not only annihilates all the reproaches that have been cast upon him; but such as does honor to mankind, at the same time it reproaches them. His natural and acquired abilities, were both of the highest rank. His apprehension was lively and distinct; his learning extensive. His judgment, though not infallible, was in most cases excellent. His mind was steadfast and resolved. His elocution was ready and clear, graceful and easy, accurate and unaffected. As a writer, his style, though unstudied and flowing with natural ease, yet for accuracy and perspicuity, was such as may vie with the best writers in the English language. Though his temper was naturally warm, his manners were gentle, simple, and uniform. Never were such happy talents better seconded by an unrelenting perseverance in those courses, which his singular endowments, and his zealous love to the interests of mankind, marked out for him. His constitution was excellent: and never was a constitution less abused, less spared, or more excellently applied, in an exact subservience to the faculties of his mind. His labors and studies were wonderful. The latter were not confined to theology only, but extended to every subject that tended, either to the improvement, or the rational entertainment of the mind. If we consider the reading he discovers by itself, his writings and his other labors by themselves, any one of them will appear sufficient to have kept a person of ordinary application, busy during his whole life. In short, the transactions of his life could never have been performed, without the utmost exertion of two qualities; which depended, not upon his capacity, but on the uniform steadfastness of his resolution. These were, inflexible temperance, and unexampled economy of time. In these he was a pattern to the age he lived in; and an example, to what a surprising extent a man may render himself useful in his generation, by temperance and punctuality. His friends and followers have no reason to be ashamed of the name of Methodist, he has entailed upon them: as, for an uninter-

rupted course of years, he has given the world an instance of the possibility of living without wasting a single hour; and of the advantage of a regular distribution of time, in discharging the important duties and purposes of life. Few ages have more needed such a public testimony to the value of time; and perhaps none have had a more conspicuous example of the perfection, to which the improvement of it may be carried.

"As a minister, his labors were unparalleled, and such as nothing could have supported him under, but the warmest zeal for the doctrine he taught, and for the eternal interests of mankind. He studied to be gentle, yet vigilant and faithful towards all. He possessed himself in patience, and preserved himself unprovoked, nay, even unruffled in the midst of persecution, reproach, and all manner of abuse, both of his person and name. But let his own works praise him. He now enjoys the fruits of his labors, and that praise which he sought not of men, but of God.

"To finish the portrait. Examine the general tenor of his life, and it will be found self-evidently inconsistent with his being a slave to any one passion or pursuit, that can fix a blemish on his character. Of what use were the accumulation of wealth to him, who, through his whole course, never allowed himself to taste the repose of indolence, or even of the common indulgence in the use of the necessaries of life. Free from the partiality of any party, the sketcher of this excellent character, with a friendly tear, pays it as a just tribute to the memory of so great and good a man, who, when alive, was his friend."

The following, so far as it goes, is an accurate and beautiful picture of this extraordinary man.

"Very lately, I had an opportunity, for some days together, of observing Mr. Wesley with attention. I endeavored to consider him, not so much with the eye of a friend, as with the impartiality of a philosopher: and I must declare, every hour I spent in his company, afforded me fresh reasons for esteem and veneration. So fine an old man I never saw. The happiness of his mind, beamed forth in his countenance. Every look showed how fully he enjoyed 'The gay remembrance of a life well spent:' and wherever he went, he diffused a portion of his own felicity. Easy and affable in his demeanor, he accommodated himself to every sort of company, and showed how happily the most finished courtesy may be blended with the most perfect piety. In his conversation, we might be at a loss whether to admire most, his fine classical taste, his extensive knowledge of men and things, or his overflowing goodness of heart. While the grave and serious were charmed with his wisdom, his sportive sallies of innocent mirth delighted even the young and thoughtless; and both saw in his uninterrupted cheerfulness, the excellency of true religion. No cynical remarks on the levity of youth, embittered his

discourse: no applausive retrospect to past times, marked his present discontent. In him, even old age appeared delightful, like an evening without a cloud; and it was impossible to observe him without wishing fervently, 'May my latter end be like his!'

"But I find myself unequal to the task of delineating such a character. What I have said, may to some appear as panegyric; but there are numbers, and those of taste and discernment too, who can bear witness to the truth, though by no means to the perfectness of the sketch I have attempted. With such I have been frequently in his company; and every one of them, I am persuaded, would subscribe to all I have said. For my own part, I never was so happy as while with him, and scarcely ever felt more poignant regret than at parting from him; for well I knew, 'I ne'er should look upon his like again.'"

The following beautiful portrait of Mr. Wesley was drawn by a masterly hand. It appeared soon after his death, in a very respectable publication; and was afterwards inserted in Woodfall's Diary, June 17, 1791; from whence I have taken it; having made one or two trifling alterations.

"His indefatigable zeal in the discharge of his duty has been long witnessed by the world; but as mankind are not always inclined to put a generous construction on the exertion of singular talents, his motives were imputed to the love of popularity, ambition, and lucre. It now appears that he was actuated by a disinterested regard to the immortal interest of mankind. He labored, and studied, and preached, and wrote to propagate, what he believed to be the gospel of Christ. The intervals of these engagements were employed in governing and regulating the concerns of his numerous societies; assisting the necessities, solving the difficulties, and soothing the afflictions of his hearers. He observed so rigid a temperance, and allowed himself so little repose, that he seemed to be above the infirmities of nature, and to act independent of the earthly tenement he occupied. The recital of the occurrences of every day of his life would be the greatest encomium.

"Had he loved wealth, he might have accumulated without bounds. Had he been fond of power, his influence would have been worth courting by any party. I do not say he was without ambition; he had that which Christianity need not blush at, and which virtue is proud to confess. I do not mean, that which is gratified by splendor and large possessions; but that which commands the hearts and affections, the homage and gratitude, of thousands. For him they felt sentiments of veneration, only inferior to those which they paid to heaven: to him they looked as their father, their benefactor, their guide to glory and immortality: for him they fell prostrate before God, with prayers and tears, to spare his doom, and prolong his stay. Such a recompense as this, is sufficient to repay the toils of the long-

est life. Short of this, greatness is contemptible impotence. Before this, lofty prelates bow, and princes hide their diminished heads.

"His zeal was not a transient blaze, but a steady and constant flame. The ardor of his spirit was neither damped by difficulty, nor subdued by age. This was ascribed by himself, to the power of Divine grace; by the world to enthusiasm. Be it what it will, it is what philosophers must envy, and infidels respect: it is that which gives energy to the soul, and without which there can be no greatness or heroism.

"Why should we condemn that in religion, which we applaud in every other profession and pursuit? He had a vigor and elevation of mind, which nothing but the belief of the Divine favor and presence could inspire. This threw a lustre round his infirmities, changed his bed of sickness into a triumphal car, and made his exit resemble an apotheosis rather than a dissolution.

"He was qualified to excel in every branch of literature: he was well versed in the learned tongues, in metaphysics, in oratory, in logic, in criticism, and every requisite of a christian minister. His style was nervous, clear, and manly; his preaching was pathetic and persuasive; his Journals are artless and interesting; and his compositions and compilations to promote knowledge and piety, were almost innumerable.

"I do not say he was without faults, or above mistakes; but they were lost in the multitude of his excellences and virtues.

"To gain the admiration of an ignorant and superstitious age, requires only a little artifice and address; to stand the test of these times, when all pretensions to sanctity are stigmatized as hypocrisy, is a proof of genuine piety, and real usefulness. His great object was, to revive the obsolete doctrines, and extinguished spirit of the Church of England; and they who are its friends, cannot be his enemies. Yet for this he was treated as a fanatic and impostor, and exposed to every species of slander and persecution. Even bishops and dignitaries entered the lists against him; but he never declined the combat, and generally proved victorious. He appealed to the Homilies, the Articles, and the Scriptures, as vouchers for his doctrine; and they who could not decide upon the merits of the controversy, were witnesses of the effects of his labors; and they judged of the tree by its fruit. It is true, he did not succeed much in the higher walks of life; but that impeached his cause no more, than it did the first planters of the gospel. However, if he had been capable of assuming vanity on that score, he might rank among his friends some persons of the first distinction, who would have done honor to any party. After surviving almost all his adversaries, and acquiring respect among those who were the most distant from his principles, he lived to see the plant he had reared, spreading its branches far and wide, and inviting not only these kingdoms, but the Western world,

to repose under its shade. No sect, since the first ages of Christianity, could boast a founder of such extensive talents and endowments. If he had been a candidate for literary fame, he might have succeeded to his utmost wishes; but he sought not the praise of man; he regarded learning only as the instrument of usefulness. The great purpose of his life was doing good. For this he relinquished all honor and preferment; to this he dedicated all the powers of body and mind; at all times and in all places, in season and out of season, by gentleness, by terror, by argument, by persuasion, by reason, by interest, by every motive and every inducement, he strove with unwearied assiduity, to turn men from the error of their ways, and awaken them to virtue and religion. To the bed of sickness, or the couch of prosperity; to the prison, the hospital, the house of mourning, or the house of feasting, wherever there was a friend to serve, or a soul to save, he readily repaired; to administer assistance or advice, reproof or consolation. He thought no office too humiliating, no condescension too low, no undertaking too arduous, to reclaim the meanest of God's offspring. The souls of all men were equally precious in his sight, and the value of an immortal creature beyond all estimation. He penetrated the abodes of wretchedness and ignorance, to rescue the profligate from perdition; and he communicated the light of life to those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death. He changed the outcasts of society, into useful members; civilized even savages, and filled those lips with prayer and praise, that had been accustomed only to oaths and imprecations. But as the strongest religious impressions are apt to become languid, without discipline and practice, he divided his people into classes and bands, according to their attainments. He appointed frequent meetings for prayer and conversation, where they gave an account of their experience, their hopes and fears, their joys and troubles: by which means they were united to each other, and to their common profession. They became sentinels upon each other's conduct, and securities for each other's character. Thus the seeds he sowed sprang up and flourished, bearing the rich fruits of every grace and virtue. Thus he governed and preserved his numerous societies, watching their improvement with a paternal care, and encouraging them to be faithful to the end.

"But I will not attempt to draw his full character, nor to estimate the extent of his labors and services. They will be best known when he shall deliver up his commission into the hand of his great Master."

The following description of Mr. Wesley's person, will be agreeable to most readers now; and certainly will be more so, when those who personally knew him are removed to their eternal habitations.

"The figure of Mr. Wesley was remarkable. His stature was low: his habit of body in every period of life, the reverse of corpulent, and expressive of strict temperance, and continual exercise: and notwith-

standing his small size, his step was firm, and his appearance, till within a few years of his death, vigorous and muscular. His face, for an old man, was one of the finest we have seen. A clear, smooth forehead, an aquiline nose, an eye the brightest and most piercing that can be conceived, and a freshness of complexion scarcely ever to be found at his years, and impressive of the most perfect health, conspired to render him a venerable and interesting figure. Few have seen him without being struck with his appearance: and many, who had been greatly prejudiced against him, have been known to change their opinion the moment they were introduced into his presence. In his countenance and demeanor, there was a cheerfulness mingled with gravity; a sprightliness, which was the natural result of an unusual flow of spirits, and yet was accompanied with every mark of the most serene tranquillity. His aspect, particularly in profile, had a strong character of astuteness and penetration.

"In dress, he was a pattern of neatness and simplicity. A narrow plaited stock, a coat with a small upright collar, no buckles at his knees, no silk or velvet in any part of his apparel, and a head as white as snow gave an idea of something primitive and apostolic: while an air of neatness and cleanliness was diffused over his whole person."

SECTION II.

A SHORT VIEW OF MR. WESLEY'S WRITINGS AND CONTROVERSIES.

Mr. Wesley's writings, like his other labors, in the design and execution correspond with the general review of his character before given. He never wrote merely to please, or to get money. His object constantly was, to inform the understanding, and mend the heart: to discourage vice, and promote virtue. He never published anything with a view to promote a party-spirit. A great degree of candor and liberality runs through all his publications; and in matters of mere speculation, he endeavored to show the necessity of christian love, and mutual forbearance among those who differ in opinion. In his controversies, he combated opinions, not men. And this he did, in general, with great moderation. He maintained, that even right opinions, make but a small part of religion: that, a man may hold the truth in unrighteousness, and therefore perish with the greater condemnation. But, a man whose heart, from a living faith in Christ operating as a practical principle, is influenced to the love of God and man, and whose life is correspondent to it, cannot err dangerously, though he may hold some erroneous opinions. And he thought, that we ought to contend for this christian temper and practice, much more earnestly, than for any speculative notions, not essentially necessary

to obtain them. This made him earnest to contend for practical truth; and had a happy influence on all his writings.

I do not mean to enter into a critical review of Mr. Wesley's writings; this would far exceed my present limits. I intend only to point out the chief of his own works, show his design in publishing them, and how far the execution corresponds with the design. For if an author well and duly accomplishes all he undertakes, it is the utmost that ought to be expected from him.

The following is an abridgment of his own words, in explaining the general design he had in publishing his Notes on the New Testament. "It will be easily discerned—from the Notes themselves, that they were not principally designed for men of learning, who are provided with many other helps; but I write chiefly for plain unlettered men, who understand only their mother-tongue, and yet reverence and love the word of God, and have a desire to save their souls.

"I have endeavored to make the Notes as short as possible, that the Comment may not obscure or swallow up the Text: and as plain as possible in pursuance of my main design, to assist unlearned readers. For this reason I have studiously avoided not only all curious and critical inquiries, and all use of the learned languages, but all such methods of reasoning and modes of expression, as people in common life are unacquainted with. For the same reason, as I rather endeavor to obviate than to propose and answer objections, so I purposely decline going deep into many difficulties, lest I should leave the ordinary reader behind me.

"I once designed to write down, barely what occurred to my own mind—But no sooner was I acquainted with that great light of the christian world, *Bengelius*, than I entirely changed my design, being thoroughly convinced, it might be of more service to the cause of religion, were I barely to translate his *Gnomon Novi Testamenti*, than to write many volumes upon it. Many of his excellent Notes I have therefore translated; many more I have abridged. Those various readings which he has shown to have a vast majority of ancient copies and translations on their side, I have without scruple incorporated with the text; which after his manner, I have divided (though not omitting the common division into the chapters and verses) according to the matter it contains, making a larger or smaller pause, just as the sense requires. And even this, is such an help in many places, as one who has not tried it can scarcely conceive.—I am likewise indebted for some useful observations to Dr. Heylin's Theological Lectures: and for many more to Dr. Guyse, and to the Family Expositor of the late pious and learned Dr. Doddridge.—I cannot flatter myself so far as to imagine that I have fallen into no mistakes in a work of so great difficulty. But my own conscience acquits me of having designedly misrepresented any single passage of Scripture, or of having written one line with a purpose of inflaming the hearts of Chris-

tians against each other. Would to God, that all party names, and unscriptural phrases and forms, which have divided the christian world, were forgot: and that we might all agree to sit down together, as humble, loving disciples, at the feet of our common Master, to hear his word, to imbibe his Spirit, and to transcribe his life in our own."

After such a declaration as this in the Preface, the reader ought not to feel himself disappointed, if he find no deep and learned discussions of abstruse subjects in Mr. Wesley's Notes on the New Testament. They are what he intended they should be, briefly explanatory and practical: but, at the same time, judicious and pertinent. I have sometimes thought, that if most of the very short Notes were inserted in the text by some judicious hand so as to form a paraphrase, and the rest be retained, the work would be more useful to common readers than in its present form.—Mr. Wesley's Notes on the Old Testament, taken chiefly from Henry, and Poole, are not held in the same degree of estimation, as those on the New Testament.

Mr. Wesley's sermons in eight volumes, were written in the same spirit, and with the same benevolent design as the Notes just mentioned. He tells us in the Preface, "I design plain truth for plain people. Therefore, of set purpose I abstain from all nice and philosophical speculations, from all perplexed and intricate reasonings; and as far as possible from even the show of learning, unless in sometimes citing the original Scripture. Nothing appears here in an elaborate, elegant, or rhetorical dress. I mention this, that curious readers may spare themselves the labor of seeking for what they will not find."—The first four volumes were written in the early part of Methodism: several of the sermons being preached before the University of Oxford, while he held his Fellowship. The subjects are important, and the discourses written with great animation and strength of language.

The last four volumes were written chiefly for the Arminian Magazine, and collected and republished in 1788. These are generally more practical than the others; and have been admired for their composition, and for the simplicity, accuracy, and ease, of the style in which they are written.

His "Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion," have great merit. The pious and learned Dr. Doddridge intimates, that he read them with great emotion; and tells us, that having gone through them, he wrote on the back, "How forcible are RIGHT WORDS." Mr. Wesley wrote them in the fulness of his heart, viewing and lamenting the wretched state of the world with regard to religion and morality. It is almost impossible for any well-disposed, unprejudiced person to read them, without strongly feeling the force and justness of the observations they contain: and they have been the means of convincing some, even men of learning, who before were utterly opposed to the Methodists.

Mr. Wesley's treatise on "Original Sin," is, perhaps, the most

labored performance that he published. He knew, and respected the abilities and character of Dr. Taylor, his opponent. He bestowed much time and attention in a careful investigation of the subject; but avoided entering into minute metaphysical disquisitions. He knew that nothing could be affirmed in this way of reasoning, however true, but what another might deny with some degree of plausibility. His treatise therefore is, an animated defence of the orthodox doctrine, in a deduction from the actual state of morality in all ages, and under every kind of restraint from evil that has been imposed on mankind: or, as he expresses it, "from Scripture, reason, and experience." And if we may be allowed the same mode of reasoning in morals, which the most approved philosophers have adopted in explaining the system of the world; if, from an uniform series of facts, we may deduce a certain *principle* sufficient to account for them, then Mr. Wesley has proved his point beyond contradiction. It seems as if Dr. Taylor had felt the full force of this way of reasoning, as he never would answer Mr. Wesley, and always spoke of him with respect.

In historical compositions Mr. Wesley did not excel. His general habit of generalizing and reducing to a few heads, every subject of which he treated; and the too great confidence he had, in the *authority* of his own assertions when he himself was convinced, in some degree indisposed him to enter into that detail of evidence from facts, so highly necessary to establish a general principle in history and biography. His works, therefore, of this kind, have not the same merit as his other compositions.

In none of his publications, are instruction and entertainment more happily combined, than in the work entitled, "A Survey of the Wisdom and Goodness of God in the Creation." This was first published in two volumes; and a gentleman, then a student at Oxford, informed me, that taking a few copies with him, as presents to some of the principal persons in the University, they expressed a high degree of satisfaction in the work: and Mr. Wesley received letters from them to the same purpose. This work was afterwards enlarged, and published in five volumes, in 1784. In the fourth volume is a translation of Bonnet's "*Contemplations de la Nature*," a work highly elegant and instructive. Mr. Wesley could not have made a better choice, as it perfectly corresponds with the general design of his own publication. In the fifth volume. Mr. Wesley has given an extract of Mr. Deuten's "*Enquiry into the Origin of the Discoveries attributed to the Moderns.*" This work was scarcely known in England, even to the learned, when Mr. Wesley published this extract from it: and is but little known at present. It is certainly ingenious, and contains a great deal of curious matter. But I am astonished that Mr. Wesley could think Mr. Deuten's reasonings and deductions from many passages of the ancients, are at all

admissible. In what relates to my own profession, I must acknowledge, that I find some degree of resolution necessary to read some of them with patience. This extract might have been well spared, as it is not very interesting to common readers; and but ill accords with the design and title of his publication.

Mr. Wesley's Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation, was not intended as a history of the present state of philosophy; nor as an introduction to the philosophical systems that have prevailed, or do now prevail, though he gives a little sketch of them: but as a general view of the most useful and remarkable things in natural history, and an illustration, for common use, of the wisdom and goodness of the Creator. "Considered in this light, it is well entitled to public approbation: and the moral reflections it contains, are as much distinguished by their justness and elegance, as by their utility." Upon the whole, it is the most useful christian compendium of philosophy in the English language.

He wrote a very great number of pamphlets on various subjects: among the rest was one entitled, "Thoughts on Slavery." He was one of the earliest writers on this subject, which has since undergone so complete an investigation; without, as yet, obtaining for the slaves that redress which justice and mercy demand. He has treated it, as might be expected from his general character, in a moral and religious view; but with great spirit and impartiality, and the pamphlet does him great credit. It has been supposed, that this tract had a powerful influence on some of the American States, in their late regulations concerning the trade to Africa.

In controversy, Mr. Wesley did certainly excel. Few have equalled him, either in skill, freedom from logomachy, or in the moderation and christian temper which every where appeared on these occasions. It does not seem, that he was fond of controversy, at least for more than thirty years before his death. He calls it in one place, if I rightly recollect, "heavy work, yet sometimes necessary to be done." Among his controversial pieces, his "Predestination calmly considered," is of distinguished excellence. "It is a model of controversy, clear and cogent; concise and argumentative; and the most convincing, because the spirit in which it is written, is as amiable as the reasoning is unanswerable. Perhaps there is not in the English language, a treatise which contains in so small a compass, so full and masterly a refutation of the principle it opposes. It does great credit to his judgment, that he so eagerly espoused, and so ably defended the mild and moderate system of Arminius."*

* Few persons among the Calvinists, seem to have any just notion of the opinion of Arminius, on the subject of Free Grace; and therefore continually misrepresent it. Mr. Wesley was a true Arminian; and I have shown in the Discourse delivered at his Funeral, that he held the doctrine of Free Grace, as fully as any Calvinist, though in a more rational and scriptural sense.

Mr. Wesley entered the list of controversy against Dr. Lavington, bishop of Exeter, Dr. Warburton, bishop of Gloucester, Dr. Middleton, Dr. Free, Dr. Taylor, of Norwich; and several others: in all of which he acquitted himself with honor, and gained credit to his cause. But the most virulent, vulgar, and abusive of his opponents, were some of the defenders of Calvinism; at the head of whom stood Mr. Toplady: a man, not wholly destitute of abilities, but, in his opposition to Mr. Wesley, greatly deficient in the christian temper, and the manners of a gentleman. Not content with writing against him in the most scurrilous language, he assiduously collected anecdotes and stories to the prejudice of Mr. Wesley's character; and not only mentioned them in private, but committed them to paper, and circulated them among his friends. I am informed, there are letters now in the hands of his friends in London, which contain some of these *sweet morsels* of scandal, and that his friends intend to publish them. But if the public consider the bitterness with which Mr. Toplady collected these stories, and how easy it is for a man of his temper to collect as many as he wants, manufactured according to his own taste, against any man living (when the authors are secure against any legal prosecution,) they certainly will not think that any charges coming from so suspicious a quarter and in so questionable a shape, against a man who lived and died as Mr. Wesley did, deserve the least degree of credit. I understand, indeed, that some charges in these letters, are as improbable on the face of them, as they are false in fact: and if Mr. Toplady's friends have any regard for his memory, they will totally suppress them; as it surely is sufficient for a man to propagate slander with zeal and diligence while he lives, without his friends, by a mistaken zeal, making him do so after he is dead.

After Mr. Toplady's death, a woman came to Mr. Wesley, and related several things, as from her own personal knowledge, injurious to his character; she said some unpleasant things concerning the manner of his death, which, as appears since on good authority, were false. Mr. Wesley, very imprudently, related in private conversation some things she had told him, supposing them to be true. What he had said, was soon reported to Mr. Toplady's friends, who publicly called on Mr. Wesley for the proof of his assertions. Mr. Wesley made no reply: and the Calvinists immediately charged him with *inventing* the story, as well as propagating it. But of this Mr. Wesley was incapable. Mr. Pawson, the present Assistant in London, was with Mr. Wesley when the woman came and told him what he afterwards imprudently related. Mr. Pawson's public and private character for more than thirty years, will not admit a doubt concerning the truth of his testimony. Mr. Wesley is not to be justified in reporting to others, the story he was told; but he was not so guilty as the Calvinists wished him to appear to the world. This

affair shows us, how easily stories injurious to public characters may be propagated; and should lessen our confidence in them. Let us suppose that Mr. Wesley and Mr. Toplady, have both obtained mercy: and let us not keep alive their differences here; while we may charitably hope, that they, now above, are both praising and adoring their Creator and Redeemer together in harmony and love!

Mr. Wesley as an author, has been blamed for his numerous extracts from the writings of others. The fact is true: but the blame supposed, does not, I apprehend, attach to it. He supposed that the works from which he made extracts were the property of the public; and that the extracts he made might be useful to the Methodists, who probably would never see the originals. And further, he did not make his extracts in any clandestine way, or for the sake of lucre. All the profits of his books only passed through his hands to the relief of the poor. The Rev. Mr. Jones, in his memoirs of the late pious and excellent Dr. Horne, has charged Mr. Wesley with selling a work of his: I suppose he means his tract on the Trinity. But this is a mistake. Mr. Wesley recommended that tract, because he approved of it; but he never reprinted, or sold it in any form. Mr. Charles Wesley composed some hymns on the Trinity, in which he made use of some texts of Scripture quoted by Mr. Jones in the work above mentioned: but surely this was not reprinting his pamphlet, in any sense whatever. I was sorry to see in so respectable a writer as Mr. Jones, a sourness and disposition to find fault, every now and then break out, in spite of all his endeavors to appear candid and liberal.

Mr. Wesley's works were printed together in 1774, in thirty-two volumes,* but very incorrectly. He was a laborious and useful writer; and his name will descend to posterity, with no small share of respectability and applause. I shall conclude this section in the words of a writer of his life; "If usefulness be excellence; if public good is the chief object of attention in public characters; and if the greatest benefactors to mankind are most estimable, Mr. John Wesley will long be remembered as one of the best of men, as he was for more than fifty years, the most diligent and indefatigable."

* Not including his Philosophy, or Notes on the Old and New Testament.

SECTION III.

STATING MR. WESLEY'S NOTIONS OF THE RELATIVE SITUATION OF HIS SOCIETIES, TO OTHER RELIGIOUS BODIES OF PEOPLE IN THIS KINGDOM; AND OF THE TRUE CHARACTER AND OFFICE OF THE METHODIST PREACHERS.

No man could understand the nature and design of the Methodist societies so well as Mr. Wesley; as he was the chief instrument in raising them, and governed them for more than forty years by rules which he himself made for that purpose. He has declared again and again, in the most express terms, that the design was not to form a new party in the nation; not to form the societies into independent churches, or to draw away those who became Methodists, from their former religious connexions. The only intention was, to rouse all parties, the members of the church in particular, to an holy jealousy and a spiritual emulation; and to assist them as far as possible, in promoting christian experience, and practical religion through the land. The design was disinterested and noble; and every part of the Methodist economy exactly corresponded with the professed design, which showed the sincerity of Mr. Wesley's declarations. The preachers were itinerant, which rendered them incapable, had they been otherwise qualified, of performing the duties of settled pastors to the societies: the times of preaching, and of other meetings, were so ordered, as not to interfere with the times of public worship in the church, or among the Dissenters. The whole economy was formed, with wonderful consistency in all its parts, to be a blessing indiscriminately to all parties. While this economy remained inviolate, it was of wonderful use. It was highly pleasing to see rigid Churchmen, and equally rigid Dissenters of all denominations, assembled together in a Methodist preaching-house; hearing the truths of the gospel preached, and each feeling the beneficial influence of them on their own hearts. This tended gradually to lessen their prejudices against each other; and however they might still differ, as to modes of worship, it brought them nearer together in christian charity and brotherly love. And every candid man must acknowledge, that since the Methodists have generally prevailed, the violence of party spirit, in matters of religion, has, in equal proportion, been diminished. I sincerely pray God, that the Methodists may continue in their *original* situation, and never become the means of re-kindling the flame of party zeal. This relative situation of the societies, the members of which still held their former religious connexions, Mr. Wesley calls their *peculiar* glory. "It is a new thing," says he, "upon the earth. Revolve all the histories of the church from the earliest ages, and you will find, whenever there was a great work of God in any particular city or nation, the subjects of that work, soon said to their

neighbors, 'Stand by yourselves, for we are holier than you.' As soon as ever they separated themselves, either they retired into deserts, or at least formed parties, into which none were admitted but such as subscribed both to their judgment and practice. But with the Methodists, it is quite otherwise. They are not a sect or party. They do not separate from the religious community to which they at first belonged. And I believe one reason why God is pleased to continue my life so long, is to confirm them in their present purpose; not to separate from the Church." See the Arminian Magazine for 1790.

Mr. Wesley has very explicitly described, both the character and office of a Methodist preacher, in a sermon which he sometimes preached at the Conference, before the preachers then assembled. His text was Hebrews v. iv. "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." In this discourse he has clearly shown, that the office of a priest, was totally distinct and separate from the office of a preacher or expounder of God's word and will, sometimes called a prophet. That from Adam to Noah, and from Noah to Moses, the first-born in every family was the priest, by virtue of his primogeniture: but any other of the family might be a prophet, or expounder of God's will to the people. In the time of Moses, the priesthood was restricted to the tribe of Levi; while the preachers or expounders of God's law might be, and afterwards were of different tribes. In the New Testament, these expounders of the law, are called νομικοί, or scribes: but few, if any of them, were priests.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the great High Priest of our profession, sent out Apostles and Evangelists, to proclaim the glad-tidings of peace to all the world. Afterwards, pastors were appointed to preside over, and to build up in the faith, the churches that were formed. "But," says Mr. Wesley, "I do not find, that ever the office of an evangelist, was the same with that of a pastor frequently called a bishop. I cannot prove from any part of the New Testament, or from any author of the three first centuries, that the office of an evangelist, gave any man a right to act as a pastor or bishop. I believe these offices were considered as quite distinct from each other, till the time of Constantine."

Mr. Wesley then goes on to observe, that among the Presbyterians; in the Church of England, and even among the Roman Catholics, the office of an evangelist or teacher, does not imply that of a pastor, to whom peculiarly belongs the administration of the sacraments. All Presbyterian churches, that of Scotland in particular, license men to preach throughout the whole kingdom, before they are ordained. And it is never understood that this appointment to preach, gives them any right to administer the sacraments. "Likewise," says he, "in our own church, persons may be authorized to preach, yea, may be Doctors in Divinity, as Dr. Atwood, at Oxford, was when I resided

there, who are not ordained at all: and consequently have no right to administer the Lord's supper. Yea, even in the Church of Rome itself, if a lay-brother believes he is called to go a mission, as it is termed, he is sent out, though neither priest nor deacon, to execute *that* office, and not the other." And Mr. Wesley declares that he and his brother considered the lay-preachers in the light of evangelists, or preachers only, when they received them as helpers in the work, or they never should have admitted them.

That there were itinerant preachers in the primitive church, who travelled from place to place preaching the gospel without interfering with the duties of the established pastors, does not admit of much doubt. We may venture to say, that one part of the Methodist economy approached nearer to this primitive practice, than any thing which has taken place in the christian church since the days of the Apostles. I have long been persuaded, that no religious establishment, whether national or otherwise, ever did, or ever will, keep up the original spirit of its institution without an itinerant ministry connected with it. This however is certain, that the Church of England, of which most of the Methodists are members, might have received a vast accession of strength from the labors of the Methodist preachers among the middling and lower orders of the people, had the rulers of that church understood in time, how to have estimated them. At present it is not probable, that either the bishops, or the clergy in general, will know or believe what advantages they might have gained from the labors of the Methodist preachers (if numbers of pious people be an advantage) till their losses have fully convinced them.

Notwithstanding Mr. Wesley's ordinations, it is manifest that he had no intention or wish, that the great body of the people should separate from the church or change their relative situation to other denominations of Christians in the land. This appears evident from the following paper which he wrote in December, 1789; and from the extracts from his last Journal, which I shall subjoin.

"1. From a child I was taught to love and reverence the Scripture, the oracles of God: and next to these, to esteem the primitive fathers, the writers of the three first centuries. Next after the primitive church, I esteemed our own, the Church of England, as the most scriptural national church in the world. I therefore, not only assented to all the doctrines, but observed all the rubric in the liturgy: and that with all possible exactness, even at the peril of my life.

"2. In this judgment, and with this spirit, I went to America, strongly attached to the Bible, the primitive church, and the Church of England, from which I would not vary in one jot or tittle on any account whatever. In this spirit I returned as regular a clergyman as any in the three kingdoms: till after not being permitted to preach in the churches, I was constrained to preach in the open air.

"3. Here was my first *irregularity*. And it was not voluntary,

but constrained. The second was *extemporary* prayer. This likewise I believed to be my bounden duty, for the sake of those who desired me to watch over their souls. I could not in conscience refrain from it: neither from accepting those, who desired to serve me as sons in the gospel.

"4. When the people joined together, simply to help each other to heaven, increased by hundreds and thousands, still they had no more thought of leaving the Church than of leaving the kingdom. Nay, I continually and earnestly cautioned them against it: reminding them, that we were a part of the Church of England, whom God had raised up, not only to save our own souls, but to enliven our neighbors, those of the Church in particular. And at the first meeting of all our preachers in Conference, in June, 1744, I exhorted them to keep to the Church, observing, that this was our peculiar glory, not to form any new sect, but abiding in our own Church, to do to all men all the good we possibly could.

"5. But as more Dissenters joined with us, many of whom were much prejudiced against the Church, these, with or without design, were continually infusing their own prejudices into their brethren. I saw this, and gave warning of it from time to time, both in private and in public. And in the year 1758, I resolved to bring the matter to a fair issue. So I desired the point might be considered at large whether it was expedient for the Methodists to leave the Church? The arguments on both sides were discussed for several days; and at length we agreed, without a dissenting voice, 'It is by no means expedient, that the Methodists should leave the Church of England."

"6. Nevertheless, the same leaven continued to work in various parts of the kingdom. The grand argument (which in some particular cases must be acknowledged to have weight) was this: 'The minister of the parish wherein we dwell, neither lives nor preaches the gospel. He walks in the way to hell himself, and teaches his flock to do the same. Can you advise them to attend his preaching?' I cannot advise them to it. 'What then can they do, on the Lord's day, suppose no other Church be near? Do you advise them to go to a Dissenting meeting? or to meet in their own preaching-house?' Where this is really the case, I cannot blame them if they do. Although therefore I earnestly oppose the general separation of the Methodists from the Church, yet I cannot condemn such a partial separation, in this particular case. I believe to separate thus far from these miserable wretches, who are the scandal of our Church and nation, would be for the honor of our Church, as well as to the glory of God.

"7. And this is no way contrary to the profession which I have made above these fifty years. I never had any design of separating from the Church. I have no such design now. I do not believe the Methodists in general design it, when I am no more seen. I do and

will do all that is in my power to prevent such an event. Nevertheless, in spite of all I can do, many of them will separate from it: (although I am apt to think not one half, perhaps not a third of them.) These will be so bold and injudicious as to form a separate party, which consequently will dwindle away into a dry, dull, separate party. In flat opposition to these, I declare once more, that I live and die a member of the Church of England: and that none who regard my judgment or advice will ever separate from it.

JOHN WESLEY."

Extracts from the late Reverend John Wesley's last Journal.

1786—July 25—Page 9. "Our Conference began at Bristol; about eighty preachers attended. On Tuesday, in the afternoon, we permitted any of the society to be present: and weighed what was said about separating from the Church. But we all determined to continue therein, without one dissenting voice. And I doubt not but this determination will stand, at least till I am removed into a better world.

1786—August 25—Page 21. "I went to Brentford, but had little comfort there. The society is almost dwindled to nothing. What have we gained by separating from the Church here? Is not this a good lesson for others?

1787—January 2—Page 26. "I went over to Deptford; but, it seemed, I was got into a den of lions. Most of the leading men of the society were mad for separating from the Church. I endeavored to reason with them, but in vain; they had neither sense nor even good manners left. At length, after meeting the whole society, I told them, 'If you are resolved, you may have your services in Church hours. But remember! From that time you will see my face no more.' This struck deep; and from that hour I have heard no more of separating from the Church.

1787—November 4—Page 85. "London: The congregation was, as usual, large and serious. But there is no increase in the society. So that we have profited nothing by having our services in Church hours; which some imagined would have done wonders. I do not know that it has done more good any where in England. In Scotland, I believe it has.

1788—August 4—Page 122. "London. One of the most important points considered at this Conference was, that of leaving the Church. The sum of a long conversation was, That, in a course of fifty years, we had, neither premeditately nor willingly, varied from it in one article, either of doctrine or discipline. 2d. That we were not yet conscious of varying from it in any point of doctrine. 3d. That we have, in a course of years, out of necessity, not choice, slowly and warily varied in some points of discipline, by preaching in the fields, by extempore prayer, by employing lay-preachers, by forming and regulating societies, and by holding yearly Conferences.

But we did none of these things till we were convinced we could no longer omit them but at the peril of our souls.

1789—July 3—Page 162. "Our little Conference began in Dublin, and ended Tuesday the 7th. On this I observe, 1st. I never had between forty and fifty such preachers together in Ireland before: all of them we had reason to hope alive to God, and earnestly devoted to his service. 2d. I never saw such a number of preachers before, so unanimous in all points, particularly as to leaving the Church, which none of them had the least thought of. It is no wonder that there has been this year so large an increase of the society."

SECTION IV.

A VIEW OF THE INCREASE OF THE METHODISTS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, FOR THE LAST THIRTY YEARS: WITH A FEW OBSERVATIONS ON THE INFLUENCE OF METHODISM.

It has already been observed, that the minutes of Conference have been printed every year: but it was not, so far as I can find, till 1765, that the stations of the preachers were inserted in them. And it does not appear, that any regular account of the number of people in the societies through the three kingdoms, was obtained till 1767. From the Minutes of the yearly Conference since these dates, I have been enabled to draw up the following table; showing the increase of the itinerant preachers, and of the members of the Methodist societies, till the last Conference in 1795.

Years.	No. of itinerant Preachers.	People in the Societies.
1765	92	
1767	104	25,911.
1770	122	29,046.
1775	138	38,150.
1780	172	43,830.
1785	206	52,433.
1790	293	71,568.
1795	357	83,368.

This increase of the Methodists, is, I apprehend, much beyond the increase of any other denomination of Christians, which have ever appeared in this or any other country, since the days of the Apostles, not immediately supported by the state or civil power. Prudence would direct, that in every large associated body of Christians, the number of people should increase in a greater proportion than the preachers among them: because one man may preach to a congregation of a thousand persons, as well, or better, than if it consisted only of one hundred. But we may observe among the Methodists,

that the preachers have increased in a greater proportion than the people. The reason of this is evident enough, to those who have carefully attended to the governing principles of the ruling preachers among them. They have been afraid lest the local preachers should acquire any great degree of influence in the societies where they reside; and have increased the number of itinerants, that the local preachers might be thrown into the shade, and be kept as much as possible from preaching in the principal congregations. This, in my opinion, is both unjust, and bad policy. The local preachers are a useful body of people: the work could never have been carried on among the Methodists to the extent it has, without them. Nor could the societies at present, be regularly supplied with preaching without their assistance, not to mention, that the itinerants themselves are taken from this body. And if any of the local preachers have superior talents to command a congregation, or to acquire influence by their usefulness, who receives the benefit? Certainly not the local preachers, whose labor is gratis; but the itinerants. It is indeed evident, that if this practice of the itinerants be pushed much further, the head will become too heavy for the body to carry.

Curiosity has led many persons to conjecture, what could be the reasons of the rapid increase of Methodism. No doubt but several circumstances, by which the Methodists have been peculiarly distinguished from all other denominations of Christians, have had a considerable influence on their increase. Their being of no party, but holding a friendly relation to all: the itinerancy of the preachers: their times of preaching: their class and band meetings, &c. &c. But the artless simplicity, the zeal and integrity, of the preachers at their setting out to travel; and their manner of preaching, have, under the blessing of God, had the most extensive influence on their affairs.—They not only preached the grand truths of the gospel, but they brought them home to every man's actual state and condition, however ignorant or wretched. They showed the necessity of repentance to prepare the heart for Christ; the necessity of faith in him, to be personally interested in the benefits of his death; and then urge the necessity of going on to purity of heart, and holiness in all manner of conversation. They constantly spoke of these things in this order, and almost in every discourse. The people rapidly emerged out of darkness into light, learned how to judge of their own spiritual state, and of the degrees of christian experience; and by the influence of Divine grace, were happily led on through the different stages of the christian life.

It is not necessary to add much on the general tendency of Methodism. This will appear evident, from what has already been said in this volume. Methodism has had some influence in meliorating the spirit of controversy; it has diffused knowledge, and promoted industry and good order among the lower classes of the people: it has

enlightened the most ignorant, and reformed the most wicked. These effects, through the blessing of God on the labors of the preachers, have been so conspicuous in many parts of the kingdom, that the bitterest enemies of Methodism, have been forced to acknowledge them. It has had a happy influence on the temporal concerns of the Methodists themselves; many, who before were in want, can now afford to contribute liberally for the relief of others. In judging of the tendency of Methodism, we are not to look at the conduct of two or three preachers, or of a few individuals in the societies, but at its general influence on the great body of the people. Thousands and tens of thousands of these, have been ornaments of their christian profession: and have died rejoicing in God their Saviour: many tens of thousands are now running the christian race set before them, endeavoring to be followers of the humble, holy Jesus. The Methodists are not angels, but they are in general what they profess to be, pious Christians, striving to escape the pollutions that are in the world, and to save their own souls.—May Methodism be preserved in its *original* integrity: may what is wrong in the general system, be corrected; and what is praiseworthy be established and improved: and may its beneficial influence on the people, extend wider and wider, till, "the whole earth be filled with His glory," who is the Author of all our mercies. Amen.

THE END.

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